WITHDRAWN

WHY IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE?

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Why is Christianity true?

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WHY IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE?

Christian Evidences

By

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TO

MY FATHER

WHO FIRST STIRRED ME TO THOUGHT UPON GREAT THEMES

AND TO

MY MOTHER

THE GENTLE URGENCY OF WHOSE INFLUENCE HAS EVER BEEN
TOWARD CHRIST AND HIS TRUTH

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE

Many believers and many more would-be believers in Christianity are staggered by the assumptions and sometimes by the reasoned conclusions of current science or philosophy. The need is great for a restatement of the grounds of our Christian belief. Indeed, in recent years numerous works on the subject have appeared. In Great Britain especially many valuable manuals have been published. Of the more recent and extended works in English those of Professors Fisher and Bruce stand in the front rank. Both of them are exceedingly valuable as general treatises. Other works not so elaborate have done admirable service. Among these may be named Mr. Ballard's vigorous book entitled *The Miracles of Unbelief*, in which he deals many a stalwart blow by means of a single conception consistently applied, at all points of the attack upon Christian belief. Mr. Robertson Nicoll's *The Church's One Foundation* states with great clearness and force the real issues raised by recent destructive critical theories.

Some writers on the evidences of Christianity, however, surrender so much that their productions seem to be books on Christian evidences with Christianity left out. They render no real service to Christianity, who strip away from it all its charac-

teristic features in order to commend it to a certain type of the unbelieving mind. Christianity is a distinct order of facts. These facts may be investigated. The first Christian literature, Christian history and Christian experience bear witness to the action of a supernatural power among men. Now if this witness is doubtful or false, by all means let us face the fact and relegate Christianity to a place among the many human attempts to find God. If, on the contrary, this witness can be shown to rest on solid grounds, let us not evade the issue with the prevalent unbelief, but in all sincerity and candor seek to make those grounds clear. No two orders of fact can permanently remain opposed to each other.

The writer believes strongly that it is a mistake to exclude any of the essential elements from the defense of Christianity in the interest of some alleged intellectual necessity of the times. Frankness is better than reserve, for example, in dealing with miracles. The parts of Revelation are joined together not mechanically but organically. One piece cannot be taken away as a sample, like an ornament from a cabinet, without injury to the whole. Emphasis and proportion, of course, are always in order. There is no need to tear miracles out of their place and hurl them into the teeth of the modern scientific man. The need is rather to assert clearly and restore the issue as to miracles. The disbeliever in Christianity, when attacking miracles, as a rule, never recognizes the real point.

We do not mean, of course, to assert that it is improper to develop one or another line of evidence to the exclusion, for the time, of other lines. This is often most desirable. We think, however, it is unfortunate to attempt to discredit any of the well-established forms of the argument for Christianity merely because some particular form happens for the moment to be unpopular. In the end more is lost than is gained by the procedure.

The attempt is made in the succeeding pages to state the argument for Christian belief from four leading standpoints. The aim has been to put the case as clearly and with as little of the formal and technical in language and style as the nature of the subject would admit.

None of the following chapters has been published before except parts of the fifteenth, which appeared about a year ago in a review article. The argument as a whole, however, has been restated.

The plan of the publishers of the series of books to which this volume belongs does not admit of footnotes, and not a great deal of space for reference anywhere. The numerals in the text refer to sources which are given at the end of the volume. This, of course, is no more than a partial recognition of my indebtedness to others who have preceded me in this field.

The "Bibliography" which is appended has been constructed on the principle of indicating to the general reader such works as are not too difficult to ob-

tain, and which will enable him to pursue his studies of the subjects of the various chapters at greater length when desired. The list of books given is far from exahustive, but it is hoped that it is not wanting in adaptation to the end in view and sufficiently extended to meet the needs of the majority of readers. It remains only to say that the index has been prepared by Rev. W. C. James, Th. D., pastor of the First Baptist Church, Russellville, Kentucky.

E. Y. Mullins.

Louisville, Kentucky,
May 30th, 1905.

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PART I.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

MODERN CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

1. The Christian of to-day is called upon to give a reason for the faith that is in him. The new weapons of attack call for new methods of defense. The believer in Christ may indeed cherish no doubt. For his own private religious life he may need no apologetic. Some indeed insist that it is needless to spend time repelling the attacks of unbelief. But they forget the increasing multitude who are dazed or bewildered by the claims and the conclusions of a skepticism which wears the garb of science and philosophy. Others think that faith and science should be left to go each its own way; that it is useless and vain to attempt a reconciliation. Each is lawful within its sphere, each is sufficient unto itself, but the spheres are wholly distinct, we are told. This, however, is a retreat, not a victory for Christianity. It is a return on its intellectual side to the monastic life. It is a confession that the world is too much for it, whereas the Master declared: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

It must not be so. A bold stand outside or a timid stand inside the truth is no presage of the best results for the moral and religious life of man. All truth is one. The Christian ideas and conceptions

must claim citizenship in the universal kingdom of truth. If any of these ideas are spurious coins in the general circulation of the world's religious market, the sooner we know it the better. No Christian believer can afford to claim exemption from the rules of war for any of his beliefs so long as he is in a hostile country.

2. Our purpose is to survey the line of Christian defenses in view of the present need. We urge no hard and fast distinction between Apologetics and Christian Evidences. One usually deals with the philosophic and the other with the historical and practical lines of proof. We are concerned chiefly with Christian evidences, although in some degree we must look at the situation in both fields.

3. The task of the defender of Christianity may be summed up as follows: It is to establish the Christian positions by means of the principles of investigation employed by the opposition, so far as those principles are valid. The defense, in the nature of the case, to be effective, must be in terms of the attack. Of course it is open to the Christian apologist to show that other principles of investigation are equally valid and legitimate. But history shows that onslaughts against the faith are rarely formidable except when they claim the backing and support of great and universal principles. Anything over and above these is usually outward trappings which have an ugly look only. They are, as Mr. Huxley says of certain imposing

words, like the bearskin caps worn by grenadiers to make them look ferocious.

4. Now the principles which are invoked in support of the conclusions of current anti-Christian views are those of some one or other of the current philosophic systems, and those of the inductive method. The philosophic views are to be examined in order as we proceed. Inductive logic first studies facts and from these draws conclusions. It does not lay down a proposition which *must* be true and then set out in quest of evidence to prove it. On the contrary it insists rigorously upon the reverse of this. First get the facts. Conscientiously, dispassionately, heroically, and even stoically gather and systematize the facts it enjoins upon us.

5. Hypothesis and verification are the mental processes employed. The hypothesis may arise in various ways. It may be, as Dr. Wace expresses it, a "sort of prophetic induction,"[1] or as Mr. Froude says, it may be nothing but "an imperfect generalization caught up by a predisposition."[2] For, be it remembered, there are no unbiased people in the world. The "judicial" attitude of mind does not mean a disinterested attitude. No man ever investigated anything without a predisposition in favor of something. This is well. Truth cannot be found otherwise. A being without a predisposition might indeed exist in the form of a petrified man, but not as flesh and blood.

6. But the chief point to keep in mind about the hypothesis, or theory, is that it is to be cast aside for

one that is better the moment the facts indicate the existence of a better. It is the truceless and eternal war of facts against superstition, predisposition, bias, and error which science undertakes to wage. This inductive method is pursued in physical science everywhere, and in the social sciences also, in economics, civics, sociology, and now at length in ethics and religion. Evolution and criticism both erect their intellectual structures with the stones blasted in the quarry of the inductive method.

We have no option as defenders of Christianity. Of all men we must not turn our faces away from an enterprise which first of all sets out in quest of facts. We hold that eternal facts, the most solid of all realities, are the contents of our Christian faith. We maintain that the only adequate hypothesis to account for a vast mass of facts is the Christian hypothesis, and that verification in all its legitimate forms in the personal and moral realm may be applied to the hypothesis successfully.

7. So far we stand on common ground with the scientist. Our science, we should rather say, perhaps, is as real as any other science. There are, moreover, other things we hold in common with science—certain starting points or assumptions. Let us glance at them. One of these is the principle of unity. The world is one, not many. Somewhere is to be found a force or principle or bond which unites all things. This is essential to thought, a first principle of all

modern research. Neither science nor philosophy will dispute this point, but rather welcome it.

We also assume the reality and worth of the moral life of man. Observe that we are not taking religion for granted, though we might assume it in some sense, but only morality. Some materialists dispute the moral view of man. We deal with his objection in our chapter on Materialism, and thereby so far relax the requirement of the assumption. We cannot devote the volume to materialism. So we start with the moral assumption. Most disbelievers in evangelical Christianity agree with us here. Professor Huxley says: "I protest that if some great power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into a sort of clock, and wound up every morning before I got out of bed, I should instantly close with the offer."[3] Such an arrangement would scarcely be "moral" in the strict sense, but the declaration, with others by Professor Huxley, indicates his recognition of the need and worth of the moral life. Thus also J. S. Mill was a staunch advocate of the ethical ideal while denying its necessary connection with religion.[4] We also take for granted the trustworthiness of normal human reason and the reality of things external to ourselves. As Dr. W. N. Clarke says, we live "in an honest world." The testimony of our senses and of our mental and moral powers may be relied upon. When it has really worked out its problems human reason does find truth. What we are saying implies

that we accept as a fact the existence of the world about us. Matter and force are real existences.

We also assume personality. This point requires attention. What we call personality, including self-consciousness, intelligence, and will, is as real a *datum* of experience as any known to us. Mind states are indeed better known to us than chemical processes. The world of persons about us is as definite a fact as the world of things. The man who assumes beforehand that only matter and force exist in the world as a whole is guilty of the same error as that of the chemist who might determine beforehand to find only oxygen in water. The importance of this point for our discussion will appear later.

8. These are the leading points which we take for granted. Let us observe next what is the scientific ideal and how it is to be realized. We shall let Prof. Huxley, in his *Lay Sermons,* furnish the statement of it. He asserts that to "learn what is true in order to do what is right is the summing up of the whole duty of man, for all who are unable to satisfy their mental hunger with the east wind of authority."[5] To learn what is true and to do what is right is surely an acceptable proposition. He is praising Des Cartes as the founder of the modern scientific method in the "lay sermon" containing the above language. He goes on to show that in his *Discourse on Method* Des Cartes blazed out the straight and narrow way of science, which surely leads to the city of Knowledge. "There is a path that leads to truth so surely that

anyone who will follow it must needs reach the goal, whether his capacity be great or small. And there is one guiding rule by which a man may always find this path, and keep himself from straying when he has found it. This golden rule is—give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted."[6] The foregoing is the substance of the Cartesian teaching, and according to Professor Huxley "the great first commandment of science."

We may accept the above deliverance with certain qualifications. As an ideal the statement is admirable, but as a practical rule of procedure it is not. There are some things accepted without qualification by science which can be doubted and are as a matter of fact doubted every day. The Law of Universal Causation is one of these. Since Hume's day men have doubted it, yet it is the corner stone of science. The Uniformity of Nature is another proposition which science unreservedly accepts. Yet Professor Huxley himself says that we hold this proposition not as one which cannot be doubted, but as a "great act of faith."

And this leads to the next statement, which is, that in natural science and in religious and moral science there are ultimate beliefs which are not of such a nature that they "cannot be doubted," and which are nevertheless held tenaciously as truth. If all knowledge is to become "so clear and distinct that it cannot be doubted" before we accept it, then

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no propositions except self-evident truths are worthy of belief; which is absurd.

9. Now the important thing to keep in mind from our present standpoint is that these ultimate beliefs of science are not one whit more certain or sure than the ultimate beliefs of religion. It is on this point that the popular mind is most confused. We took for granted the existence of matter and force, and we took for granted also personality. Now as the mind of man begins to range abroad in thought it may take any direction it chooses, but at the end of its reasoning it will be confronted by a double option, by alternative choices. The mind may delve in matter, and reason only about physical nature, but when it comes to the end it may conclude that all is matter; or on the other hand when it remembers personality and the spiritual part of man, it may conclude that all is spirit. So also if it pursues its investigation in the realm of the personal and spiritual. A man's conclusion may depend upon his "will to believe," and this will often be determined by the "interest" which previous training has awakened in him.

Now let it be made clear that science as such has nothing to do with the one or the other conclusion, the conclusion which affirms matter and denies spirit, or that which affirms spirit and denies matter, which asserts or denies God. Science looks only at the facts of nature or the facts of man's moral and religious activities. When the ultimate beliefs arise

they are due to the religious or the philosophic reason at work upon the facts of science. Of course both scientist and theologian have a right to reason in this way, if they are careful to remember where science ends and philosophy begins.

10. It is very important also to remember that the facts which physical science deals with are no more real than those of moral and religious science. The fact, for example, of chemical coherence or affinity among substances is no more real than the fact of logical coherence of thoughts. The attraction of gravitation between bodies is no more real than the attraction of affection between persons. The force of steam which propels the engine is no more actual than the force of will which constructed the engine. The progressive unfolding of an egg into a bird which can fly has no greater claim to our acceptance than the progressive unfolding of a thought into a system which conquers men. These groups of facts are equally valid. Each group can be reasoned about. Science can deal with either. One group clusters about matter and force, the other around personality and spirit. But we must rigidly insist that the data of spirit are really data; that is to say, they are "given" to us as truly as are those of matter. Reasoning about them labors under no greater disability than reasoning about physical nature. Conclusions about them may be buttressed as strongly as any other conclusions.

11. There is, however, a subtle persuasion in

many minds that somehow the conclusions and generalizations growing out of the study of physical nature are more reliable than those which result from the investigation of the moral and spiritual. This conclusion is unfounded. Some facts about nature lie on the surface, indeed, and are far better understood than others which lie deep below the surface. But this is also true of moral and spiritual facts. In chemistry the constitutent parts of water can be set forth in an exact formula and easily verified, but the ultimate nature and constitution of oxygen and hydrogen no chemist can tell. In like manner the formula of conduct can be expressed in terms of right and wrong, with the certainty, when carried out, of a given result in character; but there may be endless dispute as to the ultimate basis of right and wrong. There are varying degrees of certainty in both realms. Verification may be perfect or only approximately so in the one as in the other. Law and order prevail in both. Things occur together or follow each other in a uniform way in both departments. Or, to use the technical language, coexistences and sequences present themselves for investigation in the religious and moral realm as in the material; and verification, after the manner of the department, is possible in each.

12. There is one respect, indeed, in which the investigation of moral and spiritual facts possesses an advantage over research in the physical order. This is that in the moral realm we examine in very

large part what takes place *within* while in the other we study events *without* our own nature. "I think, therefore, I am," was the starting point of Des Cartes. The existence of thought at least is an ultimate fact. I know this more certainly than I know the existence of the boulder lying a few feet away from me. When we come to deal with faith and repentance and the evidence for Christianity found in religious experience, as we shall do in the third division of our discussion, we shall deal with facts which, for Christians at least, are attended with the highest degree of certainty. Of course we may reason incorrectly about them. This remains to be seen. But upon this point of advantage we do not here insist. The matter which we now urge is that our field of inquiry be recognized by the votaries of physical science. There is no conflict of interest or method. There ought to be sympathetic co-operation at every point.

13. The diverse conclusions of the physical scientist on the one hand and those of moral and religious science on the other are doubtless in great part due to the element in which thought moves. The study of physical facts has a tendency to blind men to the spiritual order, while very likely minds which exercise themselves chiefly with personal and spiritual matters do not always appreciate the full force of reasoning in the other department. As the hand takes the color of the dye it is steeped in, so the mind is subdued to the element it works in. This is a nat-

ural law which will operate uniformly unless checked by the action of some other law. The grist which goes into the mill of the reason is not changed in its essential nature when it comes out. Mr. Darwin, as is well known, lost interest in poetry and music, because, as he said, his mind became a sort of mill for grinding out general truths from large masses of physical facts. But the subjects in which the biologist lost his interest did not thereby lose their standing.

14. How, then, is the dispute to be settled between the man who finds only matter at the end of his researches and the man who finds God there? Mr. Haeckel, as he tells us in the *Riddle of the Universe,* cannot rise above matter, and Mr. Fiske in his *Through Nature to God* reaches an opposite conclusion. If these men are equally competent investigators, and each pursues the true scientific method, who is to determine which is right? Or are we to leave the question undetermined and conclude that we do not and cannot know? Men will not rest in the agnostic attitude. History is conclusive on this point. There is one and only one way to settle the controversy. That is to push the question further back and ask which view best accounts for *all* the facts in both departments of investigation, the facts of the personal as well as the facts of the physical realm. In other words the principle of unity will determine the final result. This principle is funda-

mental to thought and is held by science and philosophy as an axiom.

15. Now we maintain that the only bond of unity which will meet all the requirements is the bond of personality. No impersonal principle will answer. This will appear in the next few chapters. The reason of man is inevitably gravitating towards this conclusion. Nowhere does it find a secure resting place for the sole of its foot short of this.

"Very well, then," it may be urged, "you may conclude that the ultimate ground of the world is a Person, but can you claim that your conclusion is scientifically valid?" The reply is that it possesses as great scientific validity as any of the ultimate beliefs of physical science itself. Like those conclusions, it is an inference from the data supplied by science, and has not the clearness and convincing quality of the self-evident proposition.

16. Mr. Huxley himself does not adhere to his own principles rigidly. His "great first commandment of science" was that we are "to give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted." This he declared in his "lay sermon" on Des Cartes. But in other writings, in his *Evolution and Ethics* and his *Method and Results,* he adopts a very different tone. Referring to the great general assumptions of science, such as the Law of Universal Causation and the Uniformity of Nature, he says: "If there is anything in the world which I do

firmly believe in, it is the universal validity of the law of causation, but that universality cannot be proved by any amount of experience."[7] This is what Hume said about miracles, it will be remembered. In another place he says, "They are neither self-evident nor are they strictly speaking demonstrable."[8] Professor Huxley goes even further in his *Science and Christian Tradition* and talks like a believer in Christianity: "The ground of every one of our actions, and the validity of all our reasonings rest upon the great act of faith, which leads us to take the experience of the past as a safe guide in our dealings with the present and future."[9] In view of the situation in both departments, therefore, there is no need that we bandy words with physical science as to ultimate beliefs. Science is founded upon unproved first truths, hypotheses or assumptions; in other words, it rests on "the great act of faith."

17. Our purpose in succeeding chapters, then, is to show that the preponderance of evidence from the facts is overwhelmingly in favor of the view that the ground of all things is a Person, and that that Person has spoken to mankind in and through Jesus Christ. There are four classes of facts for which this is the only adequate and satisfactory hypothesis. The first class of facts is presented in physical nature, the second in the New Testament revelation, the third in religious experience, and the fourth in Christian history.

18. In Part I we deal with theories which oppose

the Christian and theistic view, concluding with the evidences for the existence of God from the material universe. The conclusion that the unseen architect of the world is a Person at once gives rise to the expectation that he will reveal himself.

19. In Part II the historic facts of the revelation through Christ are examined with especial reference to his Person and work. This is the most extended portion of the book. It lies at the heart of the evidences for Christianity. The discussion of the authenticity and genuineness of the Gospels is placed at the end of this division of our subject for the reason that the reasoning in the earlier parts is to a very great extent independent of the critical theories. That is to say, the Gospel records as they stand furnish data which we may employ as the basis of conclusions which in turn receive further support from the results of the critical examination at the end.

20. In Part III we have introduced an innovation in general discussions of Christian evidences and have employed Christian experience as an important evidence of Christianity. This form of evidence appeals with irresistible force to men and women who "know whom they have believed;" and at the same time it is, as Mr. Romanes asserted, a class of facts open to the investigation of all seekers for the truth, and should be allowed its proper weight in determining the result.

21. In Part IV we devote a few chapters to the evidence of history. To many minds this is a form of

proof which has the greatest cogency. The subject is of course presented only in outline in so brief a space. The chapter on Mohammedanism and Buddhism is given as an illustration of the comparative method of viewing Christ and Christianity. The closing discussion of Christianity as the answer to man's total religious need embodies the general conclusion.

22. The argument is, of course, cumulative. Each line of evidence is reinforced by all the others. We have not, and cannot have, in this field, demonstration in the mathematical sense. Yet the evidences of Christianity produce a practical certainty so great that it not only leaves the mind satisfied, but girds it for the highest moral achievement. Three considerations inspire the conviction that the Christian view of God and the world will prevail. The first is that intellectually it meets the requirements of the problem as well as any other view, and, for all except those who reject the supernatural, it meets them far better. The second is that morally and spiritually it is incomparably superior to all other theories. The third consideration lies in the union of these two: man's intellectual and moral natures are ultimately one. The moral imperative of his nature and the intellectual imperative will be found to be essentially harmonious in the end. Thus the demand for unity within man's nature answers to the demand for unity in the external world. Both unities are provided for in the Christian view which recognizes not only a divine Person behind nature, but a divine enterprise

of redemption in human history. The metaphysical God of theism thus becomes the missionary and moral God of historic time establishing his kingdom among men.

CHAPTER II.

PANTHEISM.

23. From the beginning of human history so far as we know it earnest minds have been deeply interested in the question: How came the world to be what it is? What is the key to the mystery of being? What is the final truth and explanation of the world? The intellectual as well as the moral and religious demands of man's nature make it impossible for him to avoid these questions.

24. Various answers have been given. The view of the Christian believer is familiar to all. For him the only answer is God. Jesus Christ the revealer of God has satisfied his heart and mind completely and his soul is at rest. Our chief task will be to examine the evidence for this revelation made by Jesus Christ. But first we must consider the question, although with much brevity, from the standpoint of those who do not accept the Christian revelation. In so doing we are limited to the evidence afforded by the world about us and the world within us. We must confine ourselves to facts as we know them for the basis of any theory of the world which we may offer. Science warns us constantly that guesses or mere preferences are not enough. Something actually "given" to us or

ascertained by us is the only solid rock on which a theory may safely rest. In all theories built thus on facts there may be, as Professor Huxley has said, somewhat of the venture of faith. This is equally true, however, of non-Christian as well as Christian theories. The point insisted upon now is the necessity for a fact foundation for all theories.

25. What, then, is the world of fact? Rocks, hills, trees, animals, clouds, planets, stars and suns are facts. The world about us is a great world of fact. But there is another world within us, our thoughts, feelings, acts of will, our self-consciousness; in short our human personality, the inner world as contrasted with the outward is also a world of fact. We know things about us and things within us.

These two worlds of fact may be further distinguished as the world of matter and the world of spirit. Really these are the only two things we know if we except moral good and evil. Matter may be subdivided further into force and motion, or into atoms and molecules, but at last it remains just the world of matter. So also the world of spirit may be regarded as thought, or as will, or as feeling, or as self-consciousness. In all these, however, it is the world of spirit and nothing else.

26. We have spoken of the two worlds. But in reality are they two? Is there any way of regarding mind so as to make it virtually the same as matter, or *vice versa?* Now this question brings us at a bound into the very heart of the present discussion

in the scientific and philosophic world. The principle of unity is that which here controls the thinking of men. Our minds by their very make demand unity. They insist upon an ultimate One of some kind from which other things proceed. If we see and know two things the mind will ask which of the two is first and which second in order of time and importance. Or is there a third something behind the two things we know which is itself the ultimate One we are seeking? What is the first cause, the uncaused existence which is deeper than all that is dependent and finite within us and about us?

It is this problem which has given rise to the various theories of the universe. These theories we are now to examine, at least the representative types of them. The merits of each will have to be tested by its adherence to known facts and by the truthfulness of its inferences from these facts, and by the degree of completeness with which it takes account of the facts.

27. It is to be observed at the outset that the theories themselves may be divided into two great classes. First, those which take as their starting point the facts of the world of matter; and, second, those which take as that starting point the facts of the world of persons. Those which begin below the personal plane of course give their own explanation of the origin of personality. Those which begin on the personal plane likewise seek to explain the world of matter below. The issue is between these two classes of theories.

Which on the whole commends itself to our acceptance as an explanation of the totality of things?

We shall examine Pantheism, which unifies all things in a single substance; Materialism, which also seeks to explain all things by a single principle, which it finds in matter; Agnosticism, which denies the possibility of our knowing the ultimate reality of existence; Evolution, the current scientific view of nature, which is also employed in much of the philosophy of our day; and Theism, which regards the first cause of the world, as a Person who dwells in all things and is at the same time above all created things.

28. There are many varieties of modern pantheism which we have not space to examine. The best form of it to exhibit its essential nature and tendencies is that of Benedict Spinoza, who was born in 1632 in Amsterdam. He is the father of modern pantheism. More than any other he imparted the impulse to the modern pantheistic way of thinking.

We may approach pantheism by indicating the need for which it is intended to provide. The mind finds it difficult to think of a God above nature, from whom nature proceeded by an act of creation. Such a God seems to be simply a mechanic who has constructed a machine and left it to itself to run its course. Besides it is not easy to grasp the idea of creation, how a world can be called into being from nothing. Then, too, our religious nature craves fellowship with God. It yearns for a God not far away, but near, to whom man can speak as friend to friend.

Pantheism tries to overcome these difficulties which the mind and heart of man encounter as he seeks an explanation of the world. It begins, as already remarked, with the quest for unity. It tries to find a way to bridge the chasm between matter and spirit, and make of the two things one thing. The difficulty of this undertaking is apparent at a glance. For certainly our bodies seem to be very distinct from our minds, and the great and mighty world about us seems to be far removed in essential nature from the inward operation of spirit, such as thought, and feeling and will.

29. Spinoza offered as the key to the difficulty the idea of substance. There is but one real thing, and that thing exists in itself and by itself. It needs nothing else to explain it. "This it is the conception of which needs no other conception in order that it may be conceived."[1] This one and universal substance is the real ground of everything else.

We are of course familiar with more than one thing. We know at least two, mind and matter, and we know both of these under many varieties of form and appearance. How are we to account for these two things and their varieties, things so very diverse in nature and appearance, if in reality there is but one thing? Pantheism answers: Matter and mind are simply attributes of the one substance. This substance, as infinite and perfect, has every attribute of perfection. But as we are limited and finite we have knowledge of but two of these attributes. One at-

tribute that we know is "thought," the other is "extension." These are not opposite and contradictory things, says pantheism. They are rather different aspects of the same thing, the eternal substance, and belong to its very essence.

Again, says pantheism, matter or extension exists in modes. Matter may be at rest or in motion. So also thought; the modes of thought are intellect and will. All modes and all attributes belong to the one substance. They have no separate and no independent existence.

30. What becomes of the visible world, the cosmos, under a pantheistic view? As a thing existing apart and for itself it vanishes altogether. Everything we see is eternal because everything is an attribute or mode of the eternal substance. Yet nothing we see is eternal because everything we know is a passing phase of the eternal. These passing phases will give place to other passing phases. They will "have their day and cease to be." Men, families, civilizations, solar systems, these are but phantom forms which stalk across the stage of the universe and vanish into eternal oblivion.

31. What view of God does pantheism hold? For one thing God is no more nor greater than the sum total of things. He is the ground of all things. He is just the essence of which mind and matter, with their modes, are the attributes. He did not create the world, because essentially he *is* the world. The world is not an effect of which God is the cause

for the same reason that we would not say a man is the cause of his own hand or other organ of his body. If we think of God as cause of the universe it is only "as the apple is the cause of its red color, as milk is the cause of whiteness, sweetness and liquidness, and not as the father is the cause of the child's existence or even as the sun is the cause of the heat."[2]

Again, God is not a person, for personality implies limitation, according to pantheism. I know myself only in contrast with something not myself. This limitation is essential to the idea of personality, urges pantheism, and hence it cannot belong to God.[3]

32. This then is the mark of pantheism; it insists that there is but one real and abiding existence. In recent philosophy this attempt to resolve all diverse things into one is known as Monism. Pantheism is essentially monistic. It cannot tolerate any form of dualism save that of external appearance. Properly understood the world is one, not two or more. All the variety we see in the world is a manifestation, in one form or another, of the one eternal substance. By an inner law peculiar to itself this substance is capable of this varied expression. According to Spinoza thought is one attribute of substance, but personality is not. The universal substance is impersonal.

33. What shall be said of pantheism? Can we accept it? We cannot. Yet we may admit at once

that in certain respects it has a fascination for many minds. It seems to unify the world so simply, for one thing. All the puzzles and contradictions, at first sight, seem to vanish. It agrees with theism in its insistence upon the divine indwelling in the world. It relieves the problem of evil of some of its darker aspects. Evil is temporary; it is a passing phase of the world, a section of the panorama of being, which we now behold. But in time it may disappear altogether. So reasons pantheism. Thus men may be induced to submit if not encouraged to aspire. Pantheism may breed a certain stoic type of endurance if it cannot produce heroes of achievement.

34. But let us try pantheism by the tests we have indicated, its conformity to the facts as we know them. Observation and science give us at least two facts as we have seen, matter and mind. But neither observation nor science shows us how these two may be merged into one. Neither has ever been transformed into the other so far as our science teaches. There is undoubtedly something somewhere under which they may be reconciled or harmonized if not made identical. But that this is a substance of which they are attributes there is no evidence. A divine will is the more probable explanation.

As a hypothesis to account for the two facts mind and matter, pantheism manipulates the facts as we know them. It does not leave matter and mind distinct, but makes them coalesce into the one substance, and thus violates a first principle of science,

which requires us to leave facts as we find them. Dualism is true in a relative, if not in an absolute way. Our philosophy must not force the two things together. It is conceivable that an apple and a stone might, if we were wise enough, be explained in exactly similar terms as to their essential nature. But even then we would go on recognizing the practical distinction between them. Until then we certainly must not make unwarranted assertions and most of all concerning things so diverse as mind and matter.

35. Again, pantheism denies the relation of cause and effect. Yet the active and passive sides of nature are recognized. Spinoza adopted some Latin phrases to express this distinction. This shows that the law of causation on which science builds must find place even in a pantheistic scheme, although the name is changed.

36. Once more, pantheism leaves us facing as profound a mystery as theism. The inner principle of its universal and eternal substance, by which it manifests itself in many modes and moods, as man and animal, plant and planet, is an unfathomable mystery. How the substance can appear in a variety of ways is as profound a secret as the creative act of theism. Besides the inner principle of change added to the substance gives us two things after all.

37. In another way pantheism errs. Spinoza began with a substance, which was essentially thought, as the basis of his theory, agreeing in this with Des

Cartes. But here again he departed from known facts. We know thought not by itself, but in connection with will and feeling and self-consciousness. That is to say, we know thought only as personal, as an attribute of personality. You cannot thus tear a fact away from its connection with other facts, abstract it, as we say, and build upon that. If pantheism recognizes thought it must recognize personality also.

This leads to the remark that our idea of unity also is derived from ourselves. So also is our idea of substance. The one substance we know best, the one permanent thing which has attributes, is our own selves. From this example of the many attributes in one underlying substance the pantheist passes out into nature and thinks he finds a similar substance with attributes. In thus borrowing his conception of unity from his own personality and denying personality in the great unifying substance he is inconsistent.

38. Why does pantheism deny personality in God? Because, as we have stated, personality implies limitation. The self must have a not-self in order to become conscious, it is urged. There must be something outside of us for us to resist, so to speak, in order that we may become fully aware of our own personality. The philosopher Lotze has given the best answer to this. Very briefly and inadequately stated, Lotze's view is: Only imperfect personality requires this external stimulus. Men grow towards

a personality which is not in need of a not-self to develop it or maintain it. The need of the not-self at first is incidental. It ceases by and by. An electric current from without may be required at first to arouse a diseased nerve, but when health is restored the nerve has life and feeling within and of itself. So of personality. The divine personality needs no outside or finite influence to keep it alive.[4] Whether this reasoning is sound or not it remains true that personality is the highest known form of perfection. As we shall soon see, there are other and most weighty objections to denying personality in God.

39. One objection appears the moment we come to consider the moral life of man. Morality is impossible in a pantheistic view of the world. If man is a part of God and not a personal being distinct from God, his acts are God's acts. Sin, as Spinoza held, is simply privation, partial existence, this and no more. What a man does is necessitated, not freely chosen. The universal substance does not admit of free moral choice. All happenings are simply the outbreakings of this substance on the surface of things. We think we are free, but this is illusion. Human life is like plant life, variegated, rich, wonderful, but without responsibility for good or evil. A beautiful character deserves no more credit for its moral attractiveness than a pansy for its varied hues. The history of men is like the history of plants, necessitated by an inner principle. There is no moral history but only natural history. Practically carried

out pantheism would lead to moral chaos in human society. All restraint would be removed. Men would simply drift along the lines of least resistance and we know whither this would lead.

40. On the religious side also pantheism fails. Spinoza was influenced by a religious motive, but in the end he sacrificed the religious to the speculative interest. Pantheism cannot be a religion. Fellowship betwen persons is the core of religion. An impersonal substance cannot serve this end. Pantheism borrows from theism the moment it admits fellowship or any other of the distinctive blessings of the religious life.

41. Now the facts of man's moral and religious consciousness are all directly opposed to pantheism. We know we are free and responsible. Consciousness teaches this. Pantheism is shattered on the rock of consciousness. We firmly believe that we have fellowship with God. This only saves us from despair in our deepest sin and suffering. All our moral struggles are based on this. It was said of Cowper, the afflicted poet but strong Christian, whose faith sustained him more than all else,

"When one by one sweet sounds and wandering lights departed
He wore no less a loving face because so broken-hearted."[5]

Only thus comes triumph over earthly ills, only thus comes high achievement. If we are a part of a blind, purposeless substance which "blunders in

our blundering and is stupid in our stupidity," and which sins in our sinning, it boots little to talk of "thought" as pertaining to that substance. Practically this theory of an impersonal purposeless substance is the same as materialism and fatalism in effect. Thus the distinction between "what is" and "what ought to be" vanishes. But if, as theism teaches, God is a holy person and man distinct from him and responsible to him, then sin may be condemned, repudiated, overcome. Then all glorious moral and spiritual attainment is possible.

42. We now conclude: Pantheism fails, because it ignores so many facts of science and of human consciousness; because it forces a solution at points where the problem as yet seems insoluble; because while it moves far away from a fact basis for its theory it leaves us with as many unfathomable mysteries as ever; and because it is content with affirmation instead of demonstration. Thus at no point—science, philosophy, ethics or religion—is it a satisfactory explanation of the world.

CHAPTER III.

MATERIALISM.

43. We have seen how pantheism ends the quest for unity. It does so by asserting that there is but one substance, and that matter and mind are simply modes of its manifestation, the inside and outside of the substance, so to speak. There are two other ways of regarding the world which are closely akin to pantheism. One takes the pantheistic principle of thought and the other the pantheistic principle of extension, and through these a solution is sought. Out of the principle of thought arises the theory of Idealism, and from that of extension or matter comes Materialism. We are chiefly concerned here with Materialism, but before beginning our discussion of it we must glance at Idealism.

44. We have not space to trace Idealism from Kant and Hegel onward to the present time, or to give more than the briefest statement of its existing modified forms. Idealism finds the unifying principle of the world in thought. Everything which exists is thought. Thought and existence are identical. Matter, if we but view it properly, is thought and nothing else. Cause and effect which we observe in the world of matter are really a mental ideal,

which we bring to matter ourselves. Space which we see all about us is also a way of regarding matter which the mind itself creates. As you might gather fruit and drop it in a bag, so the mind gathers the facts of the external world and drops them into the conception of space. Space is the envelope which the mind slips over all objects around it. This is true also of all the other forms of thought about material things. Thus with all our striving we never get at anything except ideas, or thought. Thus reasons Idealism.

These ideas, however, are not merely our own ideas confined within the limits of our own minds. The world about us is not to be confounded with the world within us. This is not the kind of Idealism we are dealing with at present. The world about is too evident and actual for us to rest in this conclusion, says Idealism. The world exists actually outside of us. If then there is nothing in the world but thought and if the world is not merely our thought about it but something more, what is it? The answer which Idealism gives is that the external world represents for us the thoughts of God. Indeed, Idealism asserts, that world is the great thinker in the act of thinking his thoughts, and we are thinkers who think his thoughts after him. For example, I forget a name and keep trying till it comes to me. In such a case my real larger self below my present smaller self knew the name all the time and kept me dissatisfied till I found it. Now, says Idealism, all

mental activity is of this kind. If I search the stars I thereby exhibit some knowledge of the stars and imply a great deal more possible knowledge. But this knowledge which is possible to me must be actual to a larger self which includes me. All my future knowledge of the stars will be a-coming to myself in the larger and all-inclusive self. My mind then by its very constitution implies a larger mind. When I think of a thing as finite my thought implies the existence of an infinite and of a mind that is infinite. This infinite self, of which I am a part, we are told by Idealism, is God himself, who is a self-conscious person. Beginning thus with an idea nothing is found in the world about nor in the world above us but the one Being whose chief characteristic is ideas.[1] All the development of the world then is just a development of God's thought. There is an evolution going on, but it is simply the evolution of thought.

Idealism contains much more than the above. I have sought merely to indicate its one constructive principle, its method of finding the object of all human thinking, a bond of unity for all existing things.

45. We may say at once as to Idealism that it teaches a great truth. And that truth is that we never reach a place in the investigation of the world where thought is not. Thought is the web which we find interlaced in all created things. It is in the beginning and the end, and in all the space between.

The evidence of the presence of a Thinker everywhere in the universe is most convincing.

46. Yet the truth of Idealism is after all but a half-truth. Idealism frequently forces a unity where we do not find it. It repeats the mistake of pantheism in this. Idealism fails to make out the identity between matter and mind, between existence and thought. We know mind in ourselves and we know matter about us and we know differences between them. One is extended and the other is inextended. The outside world, again, is the realm of necessity. Our inner world of mind is a world of freedom. If God is all, we may say again, then man is nothing. Idealism strives hard to do so, but fails to justify our belief that God and man are distinct and that each has worth for himself. At many points, indeed, Idealism asserts that things are one where all experience teaches us that they are two.

47. It is not necessary to reply at length to Idealism. It is doing good service against Materialism as a philosophy and at some points has close contact with Christianity. Its weaknesses are those of pantheism which we have already examined. One point further is all we will add in reply. Idealism is essentially monistic. As such it encounters the difficulty of all thoroughgoing monistic views. That difficulty is the conflict between the theoretical and the practical interests of men. It serves no useful end to cancel the distinction between mind and matter. It is dangerous to attempt to expunge from consciousness our

sense of freedom and responsibility; and it is ruinous to annul our personality by merging man's personality and God's into one. Dualism is a relative truth which no intellectual process has as yet been able to overcome. To force a solution by assuming some unifying principle regardless of practical consequences is not a proceeding which seems to be desirable, and leads to many evil results.

48. It is next in order to consider Materialism. Idealism, as we have seen, began with the idea; Materialism begins with the atom. As a house is built of bricks, says Materialism, so the world is built of atoms. These atoms were originally in motion. This motion was not, however, uniform. It tended to deflect some of the atoms away from the others. Thus difference arose and the world began. The idea of force is insisted upon also by materialists.

Given matter and force, or matter, force and motion, and the result is the world as we know it. The course of the development was not guided by intelligence, because intelligence comes late in the order of nature. Chance or fate or necessity was the law of the unfolding of matter into the present orderly world.

49. As to the human mind and consciousness Materialism asserts that it also is the product of matter. We see gradations in matter up to mind, it is urged, and hence we are to infer that mind is just another gradation of matter. The brain acts on the mind and the mind on the brain. Things utterly unlike

cannot thus act upon each other, says Materialism. It says further all ideas come from sensation; hence all ideas are material. Says a modern materialist: "Every student of nature must, if he thinks at all consistently, arrive at the conclusion that all those capacities which are comprehended under the name of the soul's activities are only functions of the brain substance, or, to express myself somewhat more coarsely, that thought stands in the same relation to brain as the gall to the liver."[2] It is clear that under a materialistic view a belief in the immortality of the soul can have no place. The anatomist's knife cuts the soul in pieces when it dissects the brain, or rather there is no soul left when the brain ceases to act.

50. Materialism relies chiefly upon the law of the conservation of energy to justify itself. Throughout nature we find that force passes through many changes. By chemical action or otherwise forces existing in one form are modified and reappear in other forms. According to this law thought and consciousness, as indicated, are simply the physical energy of the brain transformed. All that we call spiritual is thus the product of the physical, and there is nothing in the world but matter. Of course, Materialism denies the existence of a personal God. He is not needed. The world can be accounted for otherwise.

Is Materialism a tenable theory of the world? It sometimes makes the astounding assertion that modern science renders a verdict in its favor. This is an

unfounded statement, as we shall see. In its more recent forms Materialism has been of the psychological kind; it has been made to turn on the well-known connection between brain states and mind states, as already indicated. Our reply will therefore give some attention to this aspect of the theory.

As with all other theories, so also with Materialism, the primary consideration is the fact basis on which it is supposed to rest. Two things are given to us; one we call matter, the other mind. The problem is to explain all things by means of the data furnished by these two things and their various manifestations. Materialism, like pantheism and idealism, is monistic. It can tolerate but one thing as the ultimate fact and that one thing is of the nature of matter.

51. To begin at the beginning we may say that Materialism is not warranted by the known facts of existence in supposing atoms to be the ultimate form of matter. No atom has ever come into the range of human vision by means of microscope or otherwise. It is an abstraction of the mind, invisible, intangible and falling entirely outside the realm of our verified knowledge. Mind, on the other hand, which is made use of as the fact foundation of the theory which opposes Materialism, is known to us immediately. We know mind as we know nothing else. We know it better than we know even the grosser forms of matter which our eyes see and our hands handle. Thus it appears that Materialism is

grossly inconsistent. While insisting that all our knowledge is through sense perception it explains the world first by the atom which sense perception knows nothing of, and second by a mental construction, a theoretical creation in the realm of mind, which also lies outside of sense perception. Thus the atom which, according to Materialism, is the prehistoric invisible ancestor of all existing things, has at length begotten an invisible and intangible offspring, known as thought; and this thought in turn has the marvelous power of tracing its way into the dim and shadowy past until it lights upon its unseen, unheard and unfelt ancestor, the atom. The result is not changed if force is assumed instead of the atom as the original fountain of being. We see then that Materialism leaves the home of its nativity, the world of sense, and travels into a very far country in order to state its theory of the world.

Thus materialism is dogmatic in its starting point. Its cardinal dogma is the atom, or force, or motion, or these together, each and all of which are mental constructions implying previously existing mind, and not merely things found in nature independent of mind. The mind is necessary at every point in the materialistic construction of the universe.

52. We must here observe also that Materialism does not find a unitary principle anywhere in the universe of matter. Force and motion are necessary as well as atoms; and science has so far knowledge of sixty or seventy elements or simple substances. Here

we have multiplicity rather than unity. Materialism may reply at this point: "You are equally inconsistent in seeking unity in personality; for personality has many elements and manifestations, such as will and feeling and moral consciousness." But we reply that while this is true, it is also true that the many are bound together into the one in our personality. Personal identity and memory prove this. All mental powers, as will, intellect, feeling, etc., are bound into one in the human individual. I am the same person today that I was ten or twenty years ago. My body may have not one material particle in it now which it possessed then, but my memory assures me that I, with all my past experiences, am the same. Thus we see that it is through personality that the idea of unity arises, and Materialism borrows from personality to explain the world, including personality, and then turns and devours its own offspring by denying personality.

53. A further objection to Materialism is that it dogmatizes where science is silent. Materialism cannot allow any but its own theory of how life and feeling and consciousness and personality arise. All must come from matter through the transformation of energy. The generation of life can only be spontaneous according to Materialism. Here science asserts nothing. Up to date spontaneous generation is not proved. Until it is proved true science makes no claim. Indeed, she enjoins her votaries to crucify the impulse to assert where facts do not warrant. "If

the right hand of thy eagerness or of thy prejudice cause thee to stumble by assertion without fact, cut it off," is the command of pure science.

54. Consider next that there is no evidence that brain activity produces thought. Brain activity and mind activity are parallel facts. There is also, beyond question, a close connection of some kind between them. So much modern physiological psychology clearly shows, but no more. Thought may be a function of brain in some sense, Professor James thinks, but there are various kinds of function. Arguing in favor of immortality against the materialists Professor James shows that the latter confound distinct things in their reasoning. The materialist says that mind is a function of matter; hence without a material brain no mental or spiritual life. "Without phosphorus no thought," says the materialist. But there are various kinds of function. There is "productive" function, as when the fire combined with water in the kettle produces steam. There is "releasing" function, as when the trigger of the cross-bow releases the string and lets fly the arrow. There is also "transmissive" function, as when the pipes of the organ transmit the air which results in sound. Now so far as science knows, the brain in its relation to thought may answer to the kettle, the trigger of the cross-bow or the pipes of the organ in relation to their respective objects.[3]

It follows from the above that we cannot assert that brain produces thought; it may merely transmit

or release it. There are very strong additional facts in favor of the latter view. The most important of these facts is that the law of transformation of force, the chief reliance of Materialism, breaks down at this point. Mind activity cannot be shown to be the equivalent in material energy of brain activity. The two forms of energy are so distinct that science has not succeeded in showing any point of identity between them. As Professor Fiske says, each is a "closed circuit." Brain activity generates heat; this heat can be traced in certain forms it assumes in the process, and thus the physical equivalent of brain force may in a measure be detected. Here is one of the closed circuits. Mind activity is also self-consistent, passes from stage to stage, but never can it be found transforming itself into heat or any other known form of physical energy. The mind also is a closed circuit. Brain and thought are mysteriously connected, but in no sense are they equivalents of each other.[4]

55. We have been regarding Materialism in its defective views as to matter. It is even less trustworthy in its estimate of mind. When we consider the facts of consciousness we at once discover the failure of Materialism. In many ways mind rises above matter, transcends it, and refuses to conform to its laws. Take, for example, the fact of self-consciousness. The thinker can make of himself an object of thought. What enables him to turn his gaze in upon himself thus save an inherent power placing

him on a higher plane than that of matter? Then, too, there is the will which Materialism cannot explain. The will is a cause; matter is always an effect. The power of choice and of attention enables me to conquer the world of influences about me. I go up the street rather than down; I take my Shakespeare to read rather than another book from my library shelves as the result of an inner impulse. Materialism asserts that man is an automaton. But our sense of freedom assures us that we are not. This power of the human will which enables it to crush through actual external forces and concentrate itself upon a given object is a marvelous fact. No wonder some of the best thinkers find in it evidence of the ultimate fact of a personal spirit behind nature.[5]

56. Materialism is helpless in the presence of design in man and nature. It assumes that the world we know with its beauty and order is the result of a "happy accident" merely. All the wonderful progress which evolution teaches and which we see in nature thus arose. In ourselves we find a fact which furnishes a far better clew to guide us. We are conscious of purpose and of ability to execute purpose. If then purpose is stamped on nature, shall we go so far out of our way for an explanation when in one department of that nature, our own personality, it lies ready to hand? If we view it as a whole nature may be likened to a puzzle picture given to us with personality attached as the guide to its proper

interpretation; or to an arithmetic of which the cosmos, with its problems, is the main body of the book, while personality is the answer to these printed in the back.

57. Personality transcends nature also in other ways. The power of memory and the sense of responsibility assure us that as spirits we survive all changes in our material bodies, unless it be death itself. But in particular does our moral and religious nature impress this. There can be no abiding ground for moral worth according to Materialism. Yet our nature assures us that here are values above all others. Religion is universal to man. It is incredible that a racial instinct and conviction rooted in the very foundations of our being can be altogether an illusion. Moreover, Materialism fails utterly to account for the rise of religion in man, for its persistence and its increasing power in the world.

The moral and religious aspects of Materialism alone condemn it. Many materialists of the past have frankly admitted that there are no fixed moral standards. Room is not left for these in Materialism. Sometimes they have urged men to worship something, as man, or nature, or certain ideals, but these suggestions serve but to show how even materialists must respect the religious impulse in man.[6]

58. The relations which exist between mind and matter are also suggestive and furnish important evidence. Unable to rid themselves of the presence of mind and its importance in nature some material-

ists now assume an original mind-stuff in nature, a double-faced unity. Atoms have a mental side as well as a material. The brain is simply a large aggregation of these mentally constituted particles of matter. So we are told. But this is a surrender of Materialism. It confesses that mind is necessary to explain the world. The trouble with this view, however, is that there is no evidence of the existence of mind-stuff in detached atoms. We know mind in personality, not in impalpable star dust.

59. The superiority of mind over matter is seen in the fact that mind uses matter. Matter is the servant of mind. Mind can and does direct and mould matter in ten thousand ways. Matter can do nothing with mind.

The testimony of science is a tribute to the power of mind rather than to the sole reality of matter. Science is simply the expression of one side of human experience. We have observed nature, thought of nature, and the outside world has been poured into the mould of our personality. The result is science. Science is thus the vindication of personality and experience, and hence of the spiritual view of nature.

Then, too, nature produces spiritual and religious effects in man. It suggests God to him. The history of religion shows this. "His eternal power and Godhead" appear in nature. Hence we are led to the inference that mere matter is not the sole reality. This point has been well developed by a recent writer, who says: "Matter has, as a fact, from the very

dawn of human history, ministered to the religious development of spirit; and when we remember what religion is, and all that it has done for man, it is not too much to say that among all the ministries of matter this, its service to religion, is beyond comparison the chief.[5]

Materialism as a general theory of the world has been much discredited by recent science and philosophy. It survives in many quarters, however—not indeed as a formal view, but rather as a practical working principle. The facts of the spiritual world are simply ignored. The Materialism of practical life needs to be vigorously resisted. Theoretical Materialism cannot stand before mature reflection and the growing moral sense of the race, and the best antidote to practical Materialism is the energy of spiritual and holy living.

CHAPTER IV.

AGNOSTICISM.

Let us consider next Agnosticism, which is unlike the preceding theories in this, that instead of attempting to account for the world, it denies the possibility of ever learning the great mystery. There are various types of agnosticism which it is unnecessary for us to consider. Some of them deny the reality and validity of all knowledge. Others attempt to adhere to certain kinds of knowledge, while denying other kinds. The agnosticism most in vogue today is that which has arisen in connection with the study of physical nature, and which insists upon confining our knowledge to appearances.

60. We are here and the world is there over against us, says the agnostic. Impressions come streaming in upon us from the outside world through our sense-organs. But the knowledge thus obtained is of phenomena, or appearances only, and not of the reality behind them. There is, of course, a cause behind all things which we see. According to Herbert Spencer, this hidden cause is a force which is described as the unknowable. Professor Huxley adopted the word agnosticism to describe this attitude of mind. This ultimate force may be God, or

matter, or the universal substance of pantheism. We cannot know which. We only know its manifestations. Two chief reasons are assigned for this. One is that the force itself is an absolute, something so unlike and so unrelated to our finite minds that communication between the two is impossible. The other reason is that our minds change everything that enters them. They are like moulds into which clay is pressed and its shape changed in the process. As a result of these two facts knowledge of reality never reaches us. Truth may be started in our direction, we may imagine, from the remotest frontiers of being, and it travels towards us, but on the way it puts on a disguise, and when it reaches us it wears over its face a mask. We never see beneath the mask. Such truth is like a traveler across a great alkali desert of the West, who is so covered with dust at the end of the journey as to be beyond recognition. Moreover, like cuttle-fishes our minds emit from themselves a coloring fluid which still further conceals the true nature of things. Nature all about, rocks, trees and hills, men and women, are the masked semblances which manifest an unknowable something behind them.

61. We must not confound the position of the agnostic with that of men who claim that while we really know things, our knowledge of all things is limited. All of us can agree with the agnostic in denying perfect and complete knowledge of anything. Our knowledge of all things must grow from

more to more. This, however, is not the contention of the agnostic. He makes the bold assertion regarding our knowing facultics that they are entirely without capacity in certain spheres. He asserts that "things in themselves," realities beyond the perception of our senses, are not and cannot be known by us. The agnostic does not deny that there are such realities; he only maintains that they are unknowable to man. This unknowableness is due to the nature of these things in themselves and to the constitution of the human mind.

62. Note now the objections to this view. For one thing, there is no valid ground for assuming a mal-adjustment between our knowing powers and the world about us. Why should truth be supposed to disguise herself when she starts towards man? What reason have we for believing such a mockery? None. The discoveries of science are convincing evidence that the world without answers to the world within man. Again, why should we suppose that appearances do not reveal reality and not merely conceal? Indeed, when the agnostic declares that the world manifests an unknowable force he is self-contradictory. If the world so manifests, it so far reveals the hidden force. He is also inconsistent when he declares that there is an unknowable. If he knows that an unknowable exists, he knows at least so much about the unknowable, which at once ceases to be unknowable.

63. What is the ultimate force behind phenom-

ena? We do not and cannot know, replies the agnostic, but we know whence we derive our own ideas of force, and we know the nature of that force. Mr. Spencer says that our idea of force is derived from the human will. The power we ourselves exert on objects about us through our own volition is the final unit of power. So that if we think even a little about the ultimate power which causes all that we see, we are led to think of will. Another point: Conservation of energy is at work in nature. Every force now at work is some other force transformed. Transformation or conservation of force points back to one and only one original force, by what is known as the law of parsimony. This law warns us not to allege more causes than we need to account for things. One ultimate force is enough if the law of the transformation of energy is true. But observe carefully that this law expresses only the transformation, not the origination of force. Energy as nature exhibits it has no power of initiative. It is not an initial force. Whence then do we derive our idea of initiative? What force do we know that starts things going? The answer is, the human will. So, then, if we go back to the beginning of the world and ask what force began it we have no possible reply except that it was will. Now, why should the agnostic not reverse his proceeding? When he looks in physical nature at the results of a bolt of lightning and discovers a derived and secondary physical force, and then at human nature and discovers will an original

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and underived personal force, why does he proceed to postulate the lower instead of the higher as the first cause of creation? Why not find a person there instead of a blind force? Why assert force only if he makes any assertion at all? The world has paused long for the agnostic to answer this question satisfactorily. The one unescapable thing in the universe is personality. We may travel by any one of a thousand roads. They all converge in an ultimate Person. We shall recur to this point in our chapter on Theism, and show how it bears upon the ultimate decision of the question of the origin of the world.

64. The agnostic claims neither to assert nor deny the existence of God. Virtually he denies in claiming that we cannot know God. For, as has been well argued, if there be a God some evidence of him must necessarily exist. God is too all-pervading, things are too dependent upon him, for us to discover no traces of him. It would have been impossible for a God to cover up his tracks so completely that beings possessed of reasoning powers would find none. The stamp of the maker is on all products. The higher the quality of work, the more convincing and distinctive are the marks of the workmanship. God could not conceal himself entirely behind his works.

65. Underlying the agnostic theory is the problem of knowledge which the purpose and limits of this work do not admit of our taking up for full discussion. It is assumed here that we live in an honest universe, that our faculties correspond to the

world about us. If this is not true, then all reasoning on all subjects is vain. The consistent agnostic does not and never did exist. He could not make any assertion whatever if he were consistent. For, if our faculties are unreliable, his dogma of universal doubt is itself much to be doubted. The Greeks settled his problem for him by reducing the process to absurdity long ago.

We may now sum up briefly, with perhaps some slight repetition, the unwarranted assumptions of agnosticism which show how very untenable it is as a theory of knowledge.

66. First of all, it assumes without warrant that appearances of things and the reality behind appearances are wholly different. It does not merely assert that there is something more in a rainbow, for example, than its beautiful colors and form which appear to the eye, but that that something more is so radically different from what appears to our gaze that we may not progressively come to understand it so long as our powers remain as they are. Now we all agree that color and form are what they are in large part because the eye is what it is. A diseased eye might not discern the colors clearly and the rainbow's graceful curve might be distorted into some other shape to such an eye. But there is no ground for asserting that there is no connection between the mysterious something behind the rainbow and the very beautiful hues which manifest that something. What we see does indeed manifest something we do

not see, but there is no good reason for supposing we can never trace the one back to the other, nor for denying that so far as we do see our vision is reliable and trustworthy.

67. A further assumption of agnosticism is not only that appearances and realities behind them are wholly unlike each other, but also that the agnostic himself knows that those realities are beyond man's knowing powers. This is itself a marvelous kind of knowledge. So long as the agnostic admits that there is something behind appearances he has no right to assert it is unknowable. To know that a thing exists is very important knowledge about the thing. To know further that that existing thing is above or beyond man's powers of knowing is another exceedingly important item of knowledge. The agnostic knows still further that the thing in itself can manifest itself by means of appearances, which is a third kind of knowledge about it. The position of the agnostic, then, is self-contradictory. As a matter of fact, a "thing in itself" about which nothing can be known is a "nothing in itself." To employ the German phrase, *Das Ding an sich ist ein Unding!*

68. Again the agnostic makes an unwarranted assumption regarding man's faculties of knowledge. He claims that none of man's powers enable him to obtain real knowledge beyond appearances. There are many forms of intellectual activity in man. These are not only the "objects of sense, but also the data of consciousness, beliefs, intuitions and in-

ferences." Now the agnostic asserts that none of these can be relied upon to give real knowledge. Intuitions and self-evident propositions are not to be trusted when they go beyond objects of sense.

Here again the agnostic assumes an immense amount of knowledge about the human mind. He knows that mind so thoroughly in all its inner and essential nature, he knows this "thing in itself" which we call mind so completely that he knows it to be incapable of arriving at any kind of knowledge save one—the knowledge of appearances. As has been well said, the agnostic thus assumes a sort of omniscience regarding the limitations of his own powers. To assert what the agnostic asserts about "things in themselves" and the human mind implies almost infinite knowledge.

69. The fact is there are laws of thought as well as laws of things. The mind is endowed with certain powers which are trustworthy or else there is no knowledge of any kind. When my mind relates the rainbow in the heavens to other things, to past and future showers, to a painter's conception, or to a biblical promise, my mind thereby shows that in it are inherent laws of thought which do not belong to the world of appearances at all. These laws of thought do not mislead me. I am under their sway. I am not at the mercy of "appearances" merely. The world within man, in other words, is as real a world as that without. If that thought-world within me, therefore, tells me of things above

sense, above clouds and rainbows, if it tells me of God and spirit, I am under as great obligation to heed its voice as the voice of the external world. The wisest of the Greek philosophers, indeed, said that the real world is this inner thought-world and that the realm of mere opinion is the world of appearances. The fact is, rather, that we find truth in both departments of knowledge—not all truth but some truth.

70. Dr. Robert Flint has clearly shown that no man can consistently be a partial agnostic. To be consistent he must doubt all knowledge and not merely that as to "things in themselves." Moreover, in doubting the reality of knowledge the agnostic contradicts himself. In denying man's capacity to know, the agnostic is compelled to assert that capacity. One Greek philosopher denied motion, another asserted motion, a third declared that no opinion was possible as to motion, because the evidence was equally balanced. Thus the mind cannot attain to truth, he concluded. Yet in so concluding he relied upon his own mental powers. One truth is attainable, and that is that we ought to doubt everything. But if the mind enables us to reach this conclusion and leave it on a solid basis, then the mind is reliable after all and agnosticism is a false theory.[1] It turns out then that agnosticism is very much of a dogma, an assertion without authority, an assumption without warrant.

71. That man can have no knowledge of God takes for granted that there is no kinship between

man and God. To deny this is not conducive either to the religious or the moral life. Agnostics do not usually reject the moral ideal, but there is no valid reason why they should not if their agnosticism is true. Agnosticism has no secure basis for moral obligation. It tends to destroy all trust and all struggle for the highest things. "Bring men to think there is no objective truth outside of the region of morals, and, as a rule, what they will conclude is not that there is such truth there, but that there is such truth nowhere. . . . A soul from which all moral faith has gone is, indeed, a soul that has lost all true good, and is itself a lost soul." So remarks Dr. Flint in concluding a discussion of the moral aspects of agnosticism. He then quotes the following from Shelley as a poetic expression of the soul's desolation when the moral ideal has perished:

> "As music and splendor
> Survive not the lamp and the lute,
> The heart's echoes render
> No song when the spirit is mute:—
> No song but sad dirges
> Like the wind in a ruined cell,
> Or the mournful surges
> That ring the dead seaman's knell."

Its lack of moral force is a sufficient condemnation of agnosticism, to say nothing of its intellectual inconsistencies. On any and all grounds it is not a theory of the world worthy of earnest and aspiring men. One can appreciate its temporary value for a certain class of minds passing through a mental transition, but one cannot justify it as a working theory of life in any sphere or calling.

CHAPTER V.

EVOLUTION.

72. Next we must consider Evolution, the very widely accepted theory as to the manner in which the physical universe attained its present form. Evolution is a word of many meanings, and it is not easy to employ it in any extended discussion in a way to avoid confusion. Here is a concise definition given by Herbert Spencer: Evolution is always fundamentally "an integration of matter and dissipation of motion."[1] This is assuredly broad enough to cover most instances of evolution. A longer statement from the same writer is: "Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion, during which the matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity, and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation."[2] The meaning is that the process in nature is from the simple to the complex. It means also that this progressive change from the simple to the complex and from the complex to the more complex is not confined to the history of the single animal or plant, but that it overleaps the bounds of species. The higher animals, including man with his mental and

moral powers, were evolved out of the lower, and the lowest animals were evolved out of the plants, the plants in turn, with their life principle, having been evolved out of the non-living matter which preceded them. This, however, is only the middle stage of the process. Prior to the rise of the living out of the non-living there was a vast stretch of time preparing the materials for the coming of life. The sixty or seventy elementary substances now known were evolved out of something yet more simple until, at length, millions upon millions of years ago, no one knows exactly when, we come upon the starting point in a "primitive nebulosity," a fiery mist which was somehow set in motion and resulted in the world as we know it, including our planet and solar system and the innumerable other systems of the starry universe. The development of man also has gone on in many directions at the end of the process. The family, civil law and government, from the lowest tribes to the most advanced nations; ethics, from the first glimmer of the light of conscience to the highest moral ideal of the Christian; religion, from the worship of the ghost of some ancestor to the loftiest monotheistic faith.[3]

73. There are two or three notable points which need a word of emphasis in the above truly wonderful generalization of the human mind. One is its inclusiveness. It is universal in its sweep. No atom of matter, nor even the most infinitesimal living thing, exists which is not included in the law.

There is no minute fragment of time, past, present or future, in which it does not or will not operate. The second point is its exclusiveness. It is a principle which excludes every other as explanatory of the course of nature. No other is needed, no other is possible. In the third place the theory emphasizes continuity. Throughout the process at every stage a uniform principle controls. There are of course secondary means or causes, as natural selection, heredity, adaptation to environment, physiological selection, struggle for life, or for the life of others, etc. But no interference from without is to be countenanced for a moment. In the phrase of Professor Le Conte, the entire process is carried on through the operation of "resident forces," forces dwelling in the world itself, and not introduced therein during the progress of evolution. The universe, then, as it exists to-day is simply the unfolding of what was enfolded in the primitive element or elements.

74. It is to be noted next that evolution is not held by its advocates to be a first cause of things. The original force required for the progressive unfolding is assumed. It is already at work when the first steps are taken. Some evolutionists teach that dissolution is also a necessary part of the course of nature, and that in due time all will be resolved into the original nebulous state and a new process covering a new cycle will begin.

75. Again it is to be noted that evolution as

descriptive of the method of the working of the forces of nature is the more accurate meaning of the term. Evolution is not a cause of things, though sometimes loosely employed in this sense. There is also a difference between the purely scientific and the philosophical conception of evolution. As a purely scientific theory it refers only to the facts of nature and their proper observation classification and organization. It becomes philosophical when it is employed as the basis of theories to explain the ultimate facts and forces of nature. When a man turns his doctrine of evolution into materialism, monism or theism it thereby ceases to be science and becomes philosophy. Evolution as a science refuses to express an opinion on ultimate forces. This it leaves to the philosophers and theologians, who formulate their general views according to their varying points of view. It needs always to be kept in mind from the purely scientific standpoint that assertions as to ultimate forces are out of order. Science herself is jealous on this point and seeks ever to restrain her speculative devotees from rash theories. This does not mean that science exhausts the possibilities of knowledge, but only that science accomplishes her best results as she confines herself to her own sphere.

Evolution is the very widely accepted working hypothesis of modern science. Many assert that it is established beyond all controversy. Can this claim be made out? There is not space to enter into the

details of the answer to this question. But some of the leading points may be stated. One of the chief difficulties of the theory lies in its account of origins, another in its principle of continuity, and another in its principle of comprehension or inclusiveness.

76. Note first its account of the origin of things. The theory is that when evolution began nothing had yet been evolved. The pre-existing matter was alike in all its parts; that is, it was "homogeneous." But somehow this homogeneous matter had to be set in motion before anything but the homogeneous could arise. How did matter get this start? Mr. Spencer answers by saying it was in a state of unstable equilibrium, and that this instability was what started the motion. But, as has been well remarked, this idea of an unstable homogeneous matter is self-contradictory. If the matter was alike in every part, or truly homogeneous, it would have remained so. If it had a tendency to change in the same direction equally in every part it would remain homogeneous. Difference could not arise. If it had a tendency to change in one part more than in others motion might begin, but this would not be homogeneous matter. So evolution is greatly embarrassed in getting the world started. Besides, when the start was made, its direction had to be determined. The result of the process is an ordered and beautiful universe: a cosmos, not a chaos. Then, too, all that has come out must have been in the beginning. You

can judge of beginnings adequately only by endings. Potentially the world as it is, was in the world as it was. If evolution is true, nothing could come out that was not in at the start. It looks as if evolution required to assume two original things in order to get any development at all. But if this be true everything was not evolved. At least these two originals were not. The ordered universe seems to indicate that one at least of these originals must have been intelligent.

77. Again evolution has not established its principle of continuity. It is not necessary to dwell upon this familiar point. It is enough to indicate that the various "links" which were missing from the chain in the earlier stages of the discussion of evolution have never been fully supplied. Professor Wallace, one of the most eminent of modern scientists and an evolutionist, thinks there are at least three points in evolution where the continuity is broken. We cannot account for the rise of life out of the non-living; nor for the introduction of animal sensation and consciousness; nor most of all can we explain the higher nature of man. An unseen spiritual universe must be assumed, Professor Wallace thinks, to account for the mental, moral and spiritual powers of man.

78. Evolution also comes short in its principle of inclusiveness. As we have seen, the theory as held by many evolutionists embraces everything in man's nature and in human society as well as in the ma-

terial and organic world below man. All the changes which take place are under the operation of a single principle, viz, the "redistribution of matter and motion." [4] It is easy to see how difficult it would be to prove this. There are parts of the world which, so far as we can see, are totally diverse from matter and motion. The mind of man is not material. His moral and religious nature and all his higher life constitute an absolute break with the physical order. Some evolutionists tried to ignore these facts until it was discovered that the facts were under the operation of laws of their own. A man's mind acts and develops according to law, yet nothing but a figure of speech could warrant the assertion that the laws of such development are the same as those which control the progress of the bird, for example, from the egg-state to the adult state. Mechanical nature, organic nature, and mental nature are distinct and diverse platforms of being. Evolution in the usual sense cannot possibly include the higher platform. As Professor Jevons says: "We find ourselves, therefore, in this dilemma: if the mechanical theory is true, and science can deal only with things moving in space, then psychology and sociology are not sciences, and their subject matter never can be made amenable to scientific treatment. On the other hand, if psychology is a science, then science deals with things which do not move in space." Of course psychology is a science, as are ethics and religion which exhibit laws and phenomena peculiar to them-

selves. It follows, then, that the definition of evolution as "the redistribution of matter and motion" breaks down. There are spheres to which this definition does not apply.

79. It would appear, then, from the last point, that evolution as a fresh attempt to unify the totality of things under a single principle comes short of the goal. The principle of continuity is broken in the passage from the lower to the higher planes of being, and in the psychic, social, moral and spiritual realms it disappears altogether as a physical force. One of the great assumptions of the theory of evolution is that a progressive series of things must necessarily be the product of one continuous inner principle. A series of knives in a museum, beginning with a knife of rude stone and including those of iron and steel through all stages down to the most improved modern type, was labeled "The evolution of the jackknife." Yet the members of this progressive series did not spring out of each other. The human mind was the force which wrought out the unity and progress. Evolution then as a word descriptive of the orderly progression in the history of nature is a legitimate and proper use of the term. But the use of evolution as a means of explaining how the progress came about is as yet unwarranted by the facts of science.

Our intellectual craving for unity then finds satisfaction in a limited way only in the discovery of the orderly progress of all history. The passage from

the lower to the higher stages of being is the dominant if not the exclusive law of its activity. It is not necessary to dwell upon regressive evolution. Evolution as a description of nature unifies it superficially but not by an inner law or principle. But even a superficial unity renders more urgent the problem of the deeper unity. The mind cannot rest in a mere description of nature. It asks an explanation of the deeper riddle.

80. If, then, the inner principle of continuity, as held by so many evolutionists, fails to account for all the facts, the mind at once seeks another principle which is adequate to account for their complexity and manifoldness, and equal to the task of carrying on the development over the hard places to its culmination in man and human society and religion. Here it is proper to remark that while evolution in its earlier stages was accompanied usually by a materialistic or agnostic philosophy, in its later stages it has tended more and more towards theism, or the view that mind is required to account for the world. Theism holds that God exists, that he is a personal being in some sense, and that he sustains direct relations to the world.

We may take Professor Romanes as an instance illustrating the drift towards theism among evolutionists. In a work in the earlier part of his life entitled *A Candid Examination of Theism* the late Professor G. J. Romanes argued to show that none of the proofs for the existence of God were con-

clusive. Here is his own summary of his conclusion: "We first disposed of the conspicuously absurd supposition that the origin of things or the mystery of existence admits of being explained by the theory of theism in any further degree than by the theory of atheism."[5] In a later work, published after his death, entitled *Thoughts on Religion*, Romanes reached an opposite conclusion. Indeed he goes further than a bare belief in God's existence. He says in the closing chapter of the above work: "At one time it seemed to me impossible that any proposition, verbally intelligible as such, could be more violently absurd than that of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Now I see that this standpoint is wholly irrational, due only to the blindness of reason itself promoted by purely scientific habits of thought."[6] In the same connection he says that the doctrine of the Trinity is no more irrational than that of the Incarnation. In the above statements Romanes was not confessing his faith, but merely regarding the matter from the point of view of reason. He later became a communicant in the Church of England.

John Fiske also illustrates the growth towards a theistic view of evolution. Indeed he contends in his little work *Through Nature to God* that the principles of evolution suggest and even require belief in God's existence. Evolution teaches that every organism develops through the response of its inner life-principle to its environment. The growth of

the idea of God has taken place in the same way in the history of mankind. God is the object or environment corresponding to man's belief. His actual existence is necessary to account for the origin and survival and development of the belief. Says Mr. Fiske: "Now if the relation thus established in the morning twilight of Man's existence between the human soul and a world invisible and immaterial is a relation of which only the subjective term is real and the objective term non-existent, then, I say, it is something utterly without precedent in the whole history of creation. * * * To suppose that during countless ages, from the seaweed up to Man, the progress of life was achieved through adjustments to external realities, but that then the method was all at once changed and throughout a vast province of evolution the end was secured through adjustments to external non-realities, is to do sheer violence to logic and to common sense."[7] Mr. Fiske also says in his *Cosmic Philosophy* "that with reference to the fundamental truths of Christianity, * * * our cosmic philosophy is eminently conservative, owning no fellowship either with the radical infidelity of the eighteenth century or with the world-mending schemes of positivism."[8]

The above are two out of numerous instances which might be cited showing how the agnostic conclusion is not a result of thought but of a refusal to think. When thought begins the progress is direct, as a rule, towards theism. As Romanes says: "By no

logical artifice can we escape from the conclusion that, so far as we can see, this universal order must be regarded as due to some one integrating principle; and that this, so far as we can see, is most probably of the nature of mind."[9]

81. Theistic evolution branches into two forms. One contents itself with the principle of the divine immanence to account for all things and may stop short of Christianity. The other, which takes on a Christian form, holds also to the divine transcendence, and to miracle. God is not only in nature. He is also above it. In the Christian form it ceases to be evolution in the original and strict sense and is compatible with the doctrines of evangelical Christianity. One of the chief points at issue between the two forms of theistic evolution will come out when we discuss miracles in a later chapter.

82. As to the theory of evolution in general several attitudes have been adopted by as many classes of students. To the first class belong the dogmatists, men who hold evolution as having been finally established. It is a scientific dogma and no longer merely a working hypothesis. This position is clearly unwarranted and injures science when men insist upon holding it in this form.

83. Again it is held as a hypothesis possessing a high degree of probability, but not yet established. As a working theory it is very valuable, doubtless, but if one were disposed to cavil with it, it might be shown that as a hypothesis even materialistic evo-

lution is unscientific. The marks of a legitimate hypothesis in science are "(1) That it must not be inconsistent with facts already ascertained or the inferences to which they lead. (2) The hypothesis must be of such a character as to admit of verification or disproof, or at least of being rendered more or less probable by subsequent investigations. (3) The hypothesis must be applicable to the description or explanation of all the phenomena, and, if it assign a cause, must assign a cause fully adequate to have produced them."[10]

Now evolution in the anti-theistic forms clearly violates (1) and (3) of the above conditions, even as a hypothesis. It violates (1) in that it holds that the living comes from the non-living, contrary to the other scientific induction that life only can produce life, *omne vivum ex vivo*. In a sense it violates the second condition also, in that it assumes unlimited time for the transformation of the non-living into the living. It is thus incapable of verification in the time allotted to men. It violates (3) in that the hypothesis is not applicable to the description of all the phenomena, such, for example, as the psychic, social and moral phenomena of human society. In view of these facts it would at least seem to be incumbent upon evolutionists to hold the theory with becoming modesty. It is of the nature of a surmise or bold speculation in its anti-theistic forms, and as yet has not attained to the dignity (if the above tests are true) of a scientific hypothesis.

Another attitude towards evolution is that of acceptance in a modified form, as held by Wallace and others. This introduces Theism as the adequate cause and as meeting all the requirements of a hypothesis for scientific investigation.

84. The Christian theistic view is the most satisfactory of all the forms of this hypothesis. This recognizes the breaks at various points in the upward progress. It also recognizes the progress itself from lower to higher at every stage. It discovers purpose along the way, and particularly in man the final outcome. It leaves room for the working of many causes under the guidance of God, so that however complex the result, at least a reasonable provision is made for resources adequate to produce it. This, it must be remembered, is but a hypothesis. Science has not traced the modes of the divine operation at the various stages. The Christian can await with composure the outcome of researches into physical nature. Meantime the evidences for his own beliefs are abundant and convincing.

CHAPTER VI.

THEISM: EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

In beginning the consideration of the preceding theories, the remark was made that all attempts to explain the universe could be classified in a two-fold way. One set of theories fixed upon something in nature below the plane of personal beings, while the others chose what is found on or above that plane, to explain the world. These two departments of nature embrace all the possible evidence. We have seen that no one of the theories examined is satisfactory as a final resting place for the mind in its quest of unity, and its effort to give an adequate account of things.

85. It falls now to consider the total evidence as it is presented to us from a different point of view. We are not to assume forthwith that God exists and that he is a Person. But we may make use of the evidence afforded by personality in man in addition to the evidence below that plane in impersonal nature. We may consider the evidence thus in either of two ways. (1) We may pursue the current scientific method and adopt the hypothesis of an existent personal God and seek to verify the hypothesis by attention to the facts about us and

within us. The evidence for God's existence may in this way be as convincing as that for the law of gravitation or the uniformity of nature. The facts are all accounted for. The hypothesis covers the entire field of phenomena. Science has no more right to pin its faith to an invisible, intangible thing like the law or force of gravitation than theology to pin its faith to God. I mean so far as the method of proof is concerned. The only question is as to the fidelity to facts and correctness of inference in the reasoning. Or (2) we may study the facts without a hypothesis of any kind and ask for an explanation which will satisfactorily account for them all. After all there is little difference between these methods. They are substantially the same. It is likely that both will enter into the argument. But first of all some other matters are to be touched upon.

86. For one thing we may raise the prior question whether in the nature of the case it is possible to "prove" God's existence at all. Some theologians, even, deny that it is possible. All the arguments hitherto employed for the purpose they pronounce worthless. Following the theory of knowledge advocated first by Hume and especially by Kant, they claim that the pure reason cannot prove a God. They fall back, however, upon the "practical reason." The moral nature of man and his practical needs as a religious being, it is held, necessitate belief in a God. Hence God's existence is assumed. We believe in him not because we can prove his existence, but

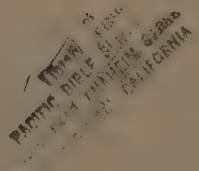
because we need him. As this view is becoming quite current we must dwell upon it for a moment.

87. All opponents of the above view will agree that the argument for God's existence based on this practical need of man is very valuable. What they object to is the claim that this is the only ground for believing in God's existence. Why, they ask, should it be supposed that the craving of reason is unprovided for in the structure of the world while that of the moral nature is satisfied? The craving for knowledge is a very "practical need" itself. How whimsical a world it would be if one part of man's higher nature can find rest in it and another part be put to permanent confusion? Is the universe so constructed that the cry of the conscience for bread is answered with a loaf and the cry of the intellect with a stone? The advocates of the "practical reason" repudiate Anselm's argument for God's existence from the idea of a necessarily existent being in the mind of man. But they at once commit the alleged fallacy of Anselm by asserting his existence on the strength of the felt need of him in the conscience. Why should a sense of moral need be the only part of the content of man's nature which we are warranted in paying attention to? Man's nature is a unit. There is no evidence that the universe is so constructed that man's reason must forever remain an "infant crying in the night," while his moral nature finds eternal peace and rest.

Again the advocates of the "practical reason" deny

that design in nature can possibly prove an infinite God. At best it but proves a finite being. A fly may prove a designer, but at best he is only a flymaker, not an infinite being. But, we must reply, it has not yet been shown that the practical need itself requires an infinite being. Some distinctly say not. Prof. James thinks that some being great enough for us to trust for the next step is all that the "practical need" requires at any one time, some being great enough to help us and protect us from the largest flies, so to speak, in a finite world.[1] Then, too, the positivist philosopher, who denies the possibility of all knowledge of the world beyond sense-perception, says that the "practical" moral and religious needs of man will certainly perish in due time. They are but the remnants of by-gone superstitions. Men are rapidly outgrowing them. It is difficult to see what secure foundation is left for belief in God if all evidence for his existence which appeals to the reason is swept away. Reference is not here made to the Bible, but only to the issue as to God's existence independently of a direct revelation.

88. Various compromises have been proposed as modifications of the view that God's existence can be proved. Some writers, as for example Professor Bruce in his excellent work on *Apologetics,* thinks that we ought to confine ourselves to the evidence as showing not that God is but what he is. Not God's existence, but his character, should engage



our attention. But it is clear that everything which tends to show what God is tends also to show that he is. The two aspects of the matter are inseparable. Professor James advocates the right of the soul to assume God's existence without proof in an essay entitled *The Will to Believe.*[2] Launch out in the dark, if you will, and act upon the belief that God exists, and experience will vindicate the wisdom of your act. Life will verify your faith in many experiences. As practical advice to the troubled soul these are admirable words. But it does not touch the question at issue, which is, how far we are warranted in asserting the possibility of proving to the intellect that God exists.

89. Mathematical demonstration of God's existence is impossible. The proof is not of a mathematical kind. This much can be conceded at once. Again, proof of the ordinary kind, known as moral or historical demonstration, is not equally convincing to all minds. Overwhelming proof, of a kind which is valid in every particular, will not convince the wilfully unbelieving. There is no mind without bias. Evidence in the direction of our preferences convinces easily, often too easily. And yet evidence does often properly convince the most skeptical. To prove God's existence in the sense of convincing of that existence is possible.

This also may be affirmed, that evidence accepted as convincing sometimes turns out to be illusory or false. Nevertheless, when all is said, it remains true

that the requisite degree of evidence does in many instances properly convince. This is true of many subjects and many degrees of evidence. The sum of the matter then is this: evidence for God's existence is not coercive to the intellect. Like all other moral proof, its fate is largely dependent upon the mental and especially the moral attitude of the mind to which it is addressed. Intellectual is as perverse as any other prejudice. Nevertheless, this alone is no warrant for rejecting the evidence as inadequate or invalid. The only final answer to the question whether or not God's existence can be proved is the evidence itself.

The barest sketch of the evidence for God's existence is all that is possible in a brief chapter. The totality of existing things, in various modes and degrees, is the proof that there is a God. There is no object of creation, from Tennyson's "flower in the crannied wall" to the mightiest of the heavenly bodies; from the dimmest light which shines in the instinct of the animal to the highest reaches of the human intellect, which may not be used as a starting point from which we may rise to God.

90. Is the idea of God native to the human mind? There is no warrant for the assertion that it is in the sense that as a finished thing it is tucked away in some recess of the soul when the soul enters the world, to be taken out upon due occasion for use. There are no such ideas. There is no way of answering the further question whether the idea of

God would arise in the mind if it were not transmitted from parent to child. For practically all peoples have some notion of a God or gods, and it is impossible to escape it in the growth from childhood to manhood. To very many people this universal prevalence of the belief in God or gods is strong evidence of the actuality of his existence.

Whether the complete idea of God is native to the mind or not, this much can be truthfully asserted: the mind is constituted for God. When it begins to reflect upon nature and life as these appear about us, the thought of God arises spontaneously, although it may be by degrees and not suddenly. The conception of God is not an intuition like an axiom in mathematics, yet a number of intuitive ideas lie at the basis of much of the reasoning to prove God's existence. The conception of cause and effect is one of these. The proposition that every effect must have an adequate cause needs no proof. The conception of dependent or derived existence over against that of independent or underived existence is of a similar nature. The moral intuition also, the witness of conscience to the distinction between right and wrong is accepted not because demonstrated but as an authoritative deliverance of the soul. These and other first truths, truths which the minds of all men accept as self-evident and necessary, lie at the foundation of the argument for the existence of God.

91. On the foundation furnished by these first

truths have been reared the various systems to prove the existence of God. A recent work describes no less than thirteen types of Theism. Each type emphasizes a different factor in the universe as the best evidence of God's existence. Some dwell on the evidence in material nature. Others accentuate the various elements in man's nature, such as the feelings, the intellect, the will, the æsthetic, the social nature. Others still combine various elements into composite systems.

Some have been discouraged by the fact that the authors of the various types of theistic proof often seem to discredit the other types, and they are thus tempted to doubt them all. It is most probable that all are valid when properly expounded and related to each other. All roads lead to God. We can only consider a few of these, and this will be done in as simple and untechnical a manner as possible.

92. One of the most convincing evidences is the indications of will in the universe. Briefly stated, this is the argument: a certain power is required to account for the totality of things. This power, in order to serve thus as an adequate cause, must possess certain qualities. We search material nature for such a power possessing such qualities and fail to find it. We then turn to man's nature and discover in will the kind of power needed.

What the mind demands in accounting for the world is a first cause. It may be denied that we necessarily seek a first cause. But as a matter of

fact we do. An infinite series of causes is impossible. The mind refuses to rest in the conception. The mind stubbornly refuses to think of an infinite chain attached to nothing at either end. All philosophers and all scientific men who hold to evolution with scarcely an exception assume a beginning of things in the form of ultimate force, or matter, or motion, even when they deny personality in the first cause.

There are many causes operating in the world. What we seek is the First Cause. Some events are both causes and effects. We must find a cause which is itself uncaused. The principle is not that every existence must have a cause, but that every effect must have an adequate cause. If we find an existence which is all cause and no effect, then we may pause.

Now science aids us greatly at this point. Science has nowhere yet found any object, event, or phenomenon which is wholly and exclusively cause. Electricity is generated by heat; heat comes from coal; the coal from the ancient forests; these obtained their properties from the sun's rays; the solar heat was fed in some mysterious way, possibly by meteors, and so on back to the beginning. Now heat and coal and forest and sunlight—all the terms in the above series —were partly cause and partly effect. So each must be accounted for by something prior. Nowhere in all the boundless realm of material nature is there anything yet discovered which is wholly cause. Ultimate atoms or force have not been discovered, but

assumed. Moreover they need a prior cause to set them in motion.

What, then, is the uncaused Cause of all things? There are strong reasons for asserting that that Cause is of the nature of will. Here are the reasons. First, science, up to date, clearly indicates that nothing in the material world has power to originate things. All events in material nature are in part effects, as we have seen. Hence we must seek for first causes in the higher realm of mind. Second, we derive our idea of power from the exercise of our own wills. The lowest savages personify the forces of nature, and polytheism arises. They see will behind events. The philosophers of all schools, in increasing numbers, grant this principle, that will is our ultimate conception of force. Hence the many derived and secondary causes are most probably the result of the first Cause, which is Will. Thirdly, not only is will our ultimate conception, the unit of force, so to speak; it is also the only force known to us which has power to originate. A new personal force in the world often turns the channels of history. Our conclusion is that Will is the First Cause of all things.

93. Another evidence of God's existence is the presence of mind in the universe. The reasoning is as follows: The natural order without us corresponds, or answers, to the mental order within us. When we think about things we can only think in certain ways. Things are thought of by us as cause

and effect, as antecedent and consequent, as before and after, as dependent and independent. We also think of things as bearing certain mathematical relations to each other. There is, in other words, an order, an inner system of thought. When we look about us we find that the world corresponds to our thoughts about it. Its objects exist as cause and effect, and in other ways indicated. This order without is the counterpart to the order within. Science again is our support for the statement. Science finds, for example, that certain chemical elements combine in given proportions and produce a certain result. This can be stated as a formula and grasped by the mind. The astronomer can predict an eclipse because he knows the mathematical relations involved in the motions of the sun and planets. In short, we find in the world without agreement with the world within us.

Now we may conclude either of two things: we may conclude that we simply read our own thoughts into the world about us, or we may conclude that the world without actually exists as we think of it. If we reach the first conclusion, we destroy science. For all science is built on the belief that the order of the world is a real order and not merely our thought about it. The unity of nature, its progress, its system and order are all dependent on this fact. If we reach the second conclusion, which is that the world is constituted really as we think about it, then there must be another Thinker greater

than we or the world, who thought all things before us, and who bound our minds and nature together thus in harmony.

94. Another important proof is from the evidences of design in nature. This is an extension of the argument from the presence of mind. This argument is very simple in its essential nature. It discovers what appears to be contrivance or adaptation of means to ends, and infers a mind which did the contriving. It does not find design in nature, but infers design behind nature from what it finds in nature. The biblical writer felt the force of this argument, "He that planted the eye shall he not see; and he that planted the ear shall he not hear" (Psalm xciv. 9). Nature abounds in such contrivances. All the organs of the body bear marks of design. The adaptations of physical nature appear in many forms. The earth, for example, is made habitable by the fact that it is slightly tilted on its axis so that we have alternations of seasons. The theory of evolution at first tended to weaken this argument, from design. More recently it has seemed to strengthen it. "The eye," said evolution, "was not created; it grew as a result of the struggle for life. Back in the dim past of low animal life the end of a nerve became sensitive to the light in the struggle for existence. Equipped with this sensitive nerve-end the animal somehow gained an advantage over his fellows and survived. He transmitted this nerve to his descendants. It continued

to become more sensitive and specialized, and at length—behold, an eye!" We will say nothing of the stretch of imagination required to realize this process, but proceed to remark that in any case the eye must in some way have been mixed in the original elements if it came out of them in the end. And this applies to the myriads of instances of design in nature.

95. Evolutionists of theistic and Christian types now quite generally hold that the argument from design is strengthened rather than weakened by the modern view of the world. The progress and order and beauty of the world, taken as a whole, are conclusive evidence of design.

There are several ways of regarding design in nature. One way is in the structure of the particular organ or adaptation to its immediate end. The valvular system, for example, found in the veins and heart of the human body suggested the idea of the circulation of the blood to Harvey. The adaptation of a bird's wing to its purpose of locomotion through the air is a marvel of nature as described by the Duke of Argyll in his *Reign of Law*. The digestive apparatus and its uses, the lungs and their correspondence with their environment, are examples. This is the older way of regarding design.

Again, we may view design in nature as a whole. Here we regard the culmination of nature in man with his moral and religious aspirations, and recog-

nize purpose in all that went before. The apparent waste at certain stages thus becomes intelligible. A pile of debris, of broken planks and shattered timbers, has in itself little evidence of design. But as scaffolding employed for the erection of a great building its uses and value were obvious enough. So with apparent waste in nature. It must be understood in relation to the whole.

Every stage of the process of development is evidence of a guiding and designing mind. The original atoms of the primitive nebulosity were an orderly system directed by intelligence; else no orderly system could have resulted. In organic nature, in chemistry, in biology, in the solar system, everywhere that we discover order and progress we infer design as the guiding principle.

96. There is lastly the moral proof for the existence of God. Conscience is an ultimate fact of human experience. We will not and need not raise here the question of its origin. Conscience recognizes the distinction between right and wrong. It bases this distinction on moral law. Out of it arises the sense of responsibility. This sense of responsibility has reference not to nature or man but to a rightful Lawgiver, above conscience. Conscience is supreme among our faculties. The intellect cannot theorize away its judgments the feelings and desires cannot control its deliverances; the will even, which can control feelings and intellect, cannot destroy or silence the voice of conscience. Its sense of responsi-

bility implies a personal relation to a Lawgiver. Some hold that the sense of fear, shame and confusion, or the sense of peace and tranquillity which attend the action of conscience, and especially the persistence of the voice of conscience, are evidence of the soul's immediate contact with God. By many this is regarded as the strongest of all the theistic arguments. The argument from history also shows a moral principle at work in the world. It is an extension of the moral proof just given and need not be elaborated here.

There is a proof for the religious man in religious experience which is probably of the greatest practical value of all the proofs. As this is to be discussed in another connection it is omitted here.

97. Note now the ground covered. The principle of causation underlies each argument. The proof from the evidence of will in nature indicates an efficient cause; that from mind an intelligent cause; that from design a purposive cause; and that from conscience a moral cause. Observe again the issue between the Theist and those who deny Theism. The latter seek the lowest possible forms of existence—matter, force or something else—and explain all the highest in terms of the lowest. The Theist reverses the process. He explains the lowest in nature in terms of the highest. One stands below the personal plane, the other on that plane. The anti-theist says, "You cannot know the highest save by resolving it back into the lowest." The Theist

says, "You cannot know the lowest save in its outcome in the highest. All that has been evolved was involved." The Theist can urge two other considerations against the anti-theist: "Your original and lowest force or matter is a speculative abstraction, atoms or what not; my present highest, from which I judge is a concrete definite reality, viz., personality. Personality comes from the realm of the known while your abstract matter or force belongs to the realm of the unknown. The basis of your view is a speculation; the basis of mine is a known fact of existence. It is more in accord with strict science to infer personality in the first cause from personality as we know it in man than to infer an abstract something lying entirely beyond present knowledge. The real dogmatist, then, is not the Theist, but the materialist or pantheist or agnostic, the clear reason for this assertion being simply this: the Theist alone finds in the realm of the known the foundation on which he rears his structure. Moreover, in your lowest original you are shut up by present science to sixty-four or sixty-five elements, with nothing to unify them. You have difference but not unity, whereas in my highest, personality, I have the only known existent thing which embodies difference in unity." Hence the Theist concludes that Personality is the ultimate fact of existence.

98. But, says the agnostic, "this is anthropomorphism. You are simply reading yourself back into nature. Your God is your magnified self." "Not

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so," replies the Theist; "this might be true if no evidence of mind, will or purpose could be found outside of man. But these are found in physical nature. Man does not read these things into nature, but finds them there. Moreover," says the Theist, replying further to the objection of the anti-theists that he merely reads himself into nature, "each of your theories which deny personality and which thus repudiate anthropomorphism builds on a fragment of personality after all. Most of them build on will. Agnosticism, of the Spencerian type, says the unknowable, behind the world is most like will. Intelligence, too, is admitted in a sense by the pantheist. The one substance attains personality in man. If the inscrutable force is intelligent, it is so in a manner far above man's intelligence, says the pantheist. Matthew Arnold finds even morality in the unknown Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness. But all these theories ceaselessly clash among themselves, never coming to rest. They are in a state of unstable equilibrium." So replies the Theist. From these facts the theist asserts that the disclaimers of anthropomorphism, and deniers of personality in the first cause, are driven to a partial personality in every instance. The Theist himself combines the fragments into a whole. That is, he accepts the materials furnished him by his opponents and rears his stable structure of theistic belief. This assures him that he is not anthropomorphic. For these opponents who furnish him the materials of

personality in bits are the last of men to acknowledge anthropomorphism. Their misfortune is that they do not agree among themselves.

If, however, the anti-theist repudiates the above views as to will, morality, etc., and still insists that the Theist is anthropomorphic, the latter can still reply that his opponent is guilty of a graver error. His method, if not anthropomorphic, is, as we may say, cosmomorphic. He rests the base of his ladder of inference not on man but on nature and climbs to his conclusion. He infers from matter and force something essentially like matter and force in the first cause. The Theist, on the other hand, plants his logical ladder on man and personality, which is the highest known form of existence. It is far easier to put personality first and matter second than to put matter first and personality second.

"But," replies the anti-theist, "can you assert that personality is higher than matter? May they not be on the same level? Or, as J. S. Mill and others have contended, may it not be true that matter, because it is prior to mind in the order of time, so far as observation shows, is superior to mind and the cause of it?"[3] The reply is: Not if there is any truth in evolution; for evolution, if it teaches anything, teaches progress from lower to higher forms, and at the end of the progressive movement and crowning it is man and mind and personality. The very idea of progress is that the last in the order of time is first in the order of importance. You must

always measure beginning by endings. All that comes out in the end was implicit in the beginning, else you have an effect without a cause. Evolution therefore clamors for the theistic way of interpreting the world.

99. The moment we conclude that God is a personal being, the mind inevitably raises the further question: Is he interested in this world and its inhabitants? Can he communicate a knowledge of his will to men, as men communicate with each other? Has he done so? The mind refuses to rest in bare theism. Christianity answers these questions about the God of Theism.

PART II.

JESUS CHRIST THE EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SYNOPTIC PICTURE OF JESUS.

A large interrogation point was left standing at the conclusion of the last chapter. Nature was seen to bear many evidences of the existence of an intelligent personal cause. Nature itself is a revelation of God. The marks of his wisdom, majesty and power are inscribed in it in every part. But neither nature nor man fully answers the questions: What is God's character? Does he care for men? Can he communicate to us a knowledge of his will?

100. The answer to the questions thus raised by nature is Jesus Christ himself. It is now proposed to set before the reader the portraiture of Jesus as it is found in the Gospels. The questions whether the Gospels are authentic and credible are not now to be discussed. This will be done in a later chapter. It will appear that the representation of the Christ of the Gospels as herein set forth involves in an important sense an answer to these questions as to the Gospel records.

In later chapters the miracles of Jesus and his ethical teachings will be taken up and their value as Christian evidences considered. It is believed, however, that an exhibition of the entire claim of

Christ will prepare the way for the consideration of the detailed aspects of his Person and work. To consider miracles and the supernatural in the abstract is one thing. To consider them in relation to the Person of Christ is quite another. The bare question of a virgin birth or a resurrection of the dead, considered from the point of view of physical science merely, is not an adequate or correct method of dealing with the issue which Christianity has raised in the world. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that nine-tenths of the opposition to the Christian view of miracles is attended by failure to recognize the Christian issue. Christianity did not and does not raise the question of the bare possibility of miracles. The issue is a far larger one, of which miracles in the usual sense are a part only. Men often deal with the miracles of Jesus as if he were merely a thaumaturgist or wonderworking fakir, with no more practically serious claim upon us. When men discuss the miracles of Christ let them not beg the question by isolating them in a manner foreign to him. These remarks apply to all the other aspects of the work and claims of Christ. They must be viewed as a whole and related properly to him.

The object of present effort, then, is to obtain a comprehensive view of Christ as we find it in the Gospels. For the time, let it be understood, we are not making an argument. The argument will follow. We are simply endeavoring to ascertain

the facts from which the argument may be constructed. Indeed, we are persuaded that, properly attended to, the facts themselves will constitute an argument to the unbiased mind. It is believed also that the portrayal given will bear internal evidences so convincing that the candid reader will not be disposed to go behind the picture to question the records from which it is taken. This, however, remains to be seen. The reader himself must judge.

101. Who and what, then, was Jesus Christ? There is no longer any question that a being bearing this name once walked the earth. The agreement is also practically unanimous that he lived at the time he is alleged to have lived, and that from him sprang the movement in the world which we know as Christianity. In order to obtain an adequate view of him we are necessarily carried back to the historical records of his earthly career, to the words of those who wrote about him, and particularly to his own words about himself. Later we shall see how far history has verified these words. For the present we confine our view to his own teachings and actions, and the impression made by them upon his immediate followers. This impression is a necessary part of the representation, because it is often the best interpretation of the meaning of his words. The plan will be to exhibit Christ in a series of relationships which will be sufficiently exhaustive for our purpose.

102. Note first, then, Christ's relation to sin.

Sin is a primary and cardinal fact in all religious experience. It stands at the threshold in all readjustments with God. Without prejudging the case in the least degree, what do we find? For one thing we find nowhere in the records that Jesus ever made confession of sin, although in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican he denounces self-righteousness and commends confession. The holiest among the saints of earth have been most severe in self-condemnation. Why the exception in the case of Jesus? His teachings as to sin went to the innermost springs of conduct. No critic of moral behavior who has ever walked the earth was so drastic as he in estimating sin. No one has endured sorer temptations than he; out of them all he came forth unscathed. His enemies hounded him to death, yet even they detected in him no sin. Indeed, he flung out the challenge, "which of you convicteth me of sin?" and no one could take it up. They accused him of keeping company with publicans and sinners, which from their standpoint was a fault. But, as Dr. Fisher says, "We cannot think of a single accusation that does not redound to his credit." His own disciples detected in him no sin, and the betrayer hanged himself from remorse. Moreover, he was the detector and revealer of sin in the hearts of others. In his presence Peter exclaims: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v.8). And yet searching and radical as was his dealing with sin, he was gentle, tactful

and compassionate towards those under its power. "Go and sin no more" was his word to the restored victims of sin. Strange and new was this that the Most Holy should thus commiserate the unholy.

103. And yet there is another and even higher paradox in his relations to sin. To be a sinless man, compassionating sinful men, is one thing. To exercise the prerogative of forgiving sin is quite another. Yet Jesus asserts this prerogative, and works a miracle to establish his claim. "He blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God," this was the charge of his critics. Note his reply recorded in the oldest Gospel: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house. And he arose, and straightway took up the bed and went forth before them all, insomuch that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, we never saw it on this fashion" (Mark ii.7, 10-12).

But Jesus bore a still more unique relation to sin. At the last supper he declares that his blood was to be shed for the remission of sins (Matt. xxvi.28). In the words to the disciples after the resurrection he declared that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations (Luke xxiv.47).

For the present we refrain from drawing any conclusion as to the essential nature of this Person who moves thus before us. Well might we ask: who

then is this man whom no one convicts of sin, who calmly forgives sins, and who asserts that he is to bear the penalty of sin in order to its forgiveness in the lives of others, and who hesitates not to declare that a world-wide evangel of forgiveness shall be proclaimed in his name.* But we do not now raise the prior question as to who he is. One point only we may note by way of summary of the above teachings: They are practically exhaustive of the possible relations which a sinless man or even God can sustain towards sin. The two distinct spheres of relationship come clearly into view.

104. Such a relation to sin suggests at once a relation to the law of which sin is a violation. We notice in the next place then Christ's relation to the law. In his teachings the law of Moses comes into comparison or contrast with the law taught by Christ. The facts, however, will exhibit his relation to moral law universally.

105. We note at the outset that Jesus contrasts himself with all other moral teachers. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, . . . but I say unto you" is a form of expression repeatedly found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.-vii.). Old Testament prophets began their message with "thus saith the Lord." But here is a teacher who announces no source of authority other than himself. I do not forget that elsewhere Jesus ascribes his teaching to God. That is a fact to be allowed due weight. At present we are concerned

with the remarkable fact that in numerous passages he makes himself the center from whence emanates his word. Observe also that at this point we are not concerned with the moral excellence of Christ's teachings, but rather with his function in relation to moral law. We find, then, that throughout the Sermon on the Mount he assumes an authoritative tone. He proclaims his teachings as absolute and final. The wise and the foolish men are those who do or do not hear and keep "these sayings of mine." And so throughout the Gospels. The sower of the seed in the parables is the Son of Man.

Again, Jesus fulfills the law of Moses. The sense here is not that he obeys the law merely. It means far more; it means that he completes it, "fills it full" so to speak with meaning and power. He carries law back into the region of motive, spiritualizes and elevates it. His wisdom is seen in his care in conserving every fragment of ethical truth which he found, but particularly is it seen in his unerring skill in penetrating to the kernel and opening up its fullness of meaning and making a teaching which was external internal, and in making that which was relative and transient, absolute and permanent.

The moral teachings of Moses were as a vessel partly filled. Christ filled it to the brim with the water of life. Thus he "filled full" those teachings. This is true of the ceremonial as well as of the moral law, as appears in the Epistle to the Hebrews especially. In his sacrificial death he fulfilled the idea

of sacrifice and of priesthood, and forever abrogated external sacrifices for sin. This is a distinctive mark of Christianity as a religion. Thus he served a universal end of the human conscience. For heathen sacrifices are but broken shadows of the true. In thus fulfilling or filling full ceremonial as well as moral law, Christ passed over from the moral to the religious realm, and completely fulfilled the possible offices in a religious as well as moral ministry to the race.

As a rule Jesus simply assumed the functions above described in relation to moral law. Yet he openly declares himself Lord. "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord." "Then shall I profess unto them, I never knew you." When he says "I came not to destroy the law or the prophets" he quietly assumes that he does not belong to the order of prophets or other Old Testament teachers and that he could so destroy if he chose. We have to remark also upon his assumed superiority to law as embodied in institutions. Said he of himself: "A greater than the temple is here" (Matt. xii. 6). A collison arose between him and the Pharisees which gave occasion for an express statement as to his function in regard to Jewish law as embodied in institutions. He vindicated his conduct in Sabbath observance by the simple authoritative declaration: "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Matt. xii. 8). He announced that the men of Nineveh and the queen of the South would rise up in judgment

against that generation because he the greater than Jonah who preached to the Ninevites, and than Solomon whose glories attracted the Queen of Sheba, was present among them (Matt. xii. 40-42). And lastly he announces that he is to be the judge of all men. He is to scrutinize their conduct and adjudicate upon their eternal destiny. Most surprising of all and baffling even yet to interpreters, the standard of final judgment relates to himself. Inasmuch as we did it or did it not unto him through his own is the form of statement employed to determine eternal rewards and punishments. It is evident that we are dealing here with claims of a most extraordinary kind. He announces himself as lawgiver to mankind, and relates himself to human conduct in a manner which at least suggests the divine. Christ's relation to moral law gives rise to another vitally important consideration which we now take up. The idea of law belongs to a kingdom in which it can be administered.

106. The consideration referred to is his relation to the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven is central in the teaching of Jesus. As to the meaning of the expression we need not attempt more than a very brief summary. Our chief concern is with his personal relations to that Kingdom.

The teachings of Jesus abound in references to the Kingdom of God. The Gospel of Matthew is constructed around the idea, and there are those who

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consider that in the conception of the Kingdom is found an exhaustive summary of all that Jesus taught.[1] Dr. Hort gives the following definition of the Kingdom: It is "the world of invisible laws by which God is ruling and blessing His creatures." As Professor Sanday remarks upon this definition the points of emphasis are the heavenly origin of the Kingdom, the invisible nature of the laws which govern it, and especially that these laws are a "world" in themselves. They are internally connected, "form a system, are a cosmos within the cosmos." Here are the notes of the Kingdom. It is a present Kingdom, it is "at hand," as Jesus announced. Yet it is future in some of its phases. "Thy Kingdom come" is the burden of the prayer he taught the disciples. The Kingdom of God is both internal and external. It is "within you" and cometh not "with observation," yet men enter it violently. It is a seed planted which becomes the greatest of trees. The inward principle works itself out visibly. The Kingdom is local, at first confined to the people of Christ's own nation; then it is to become universal. Men from the east and the west shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom. To seek the Kingdom is the supreme duty of man, it is the *summum bonum* of Christianity. To be a worthy member of it is to discharge exhaustively religious obligations.

107. Such is the Kingdom. It is a notable fact that it is announced as the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven. But it is a more notable fact

1. Bruce.

that Jesus announces himself as the King of that Kingdom. He founds the Kingdom, and announces its laws, as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere. "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom," is one of his forms of statement. Christ announces conditions of membership in the Kingdom, describes the character of its members, fixes the rewards of those who labor therein, and the principles on which they are to be bestowed. "I appoint unto you a Kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink in my Kingdom, and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke xxii. 29-30). He is the nobleman who goes into the far country to receive His Kingdom (Luke xix. 12). A quotation from one who has practiced much reserve in dealing with the subject of the Person of Christ may close this paragraph. The author of *Ecce Homo* says: "He (Christ) undertook to be the Father of an everlasting Kingdom and the legislator of a world-wide society." Again the same writer says that Christ in describing himself as King "claimed the character first of Founder, next of Legislator, thirdly, in a certain high and peculiar sense, of Judge, of a new divine society."[2]

What manner of man is this who assumes the position of sovereignty in the religious realm and who discharges an office which seems no less than divine in a world of spiritual forces? At this point we simply raise the question. We do not answer it. We content

2. Seely

ourselves with remarking that the place and function of Christ in relation to the Kingdom are in harmony with what we have learned as to his relations to sin and the moral law.

108. But out of his position at the head of the spiritual Kingdom arises another question, and that is as to his relation to Providence. As arbiter of the religious destinies of men in a spiritual Kingdom, stupendous responsibilities devolve upon him. Can He control events and forces in the world and carry his Kingdom on to its consummation? There can be no doubt as to his own answer to this question. The reader is referred to chapters twenty-four and twenty-five in the Gospel of Matthew and the corresponding passages in Mark and Luke. These chapters are an elaborate prophecy of the future of his Kingdom. It is unnecessary and would be irrelevant for us to delay over the many difficulties of interpretation here. Some think to convict Jesus of inconsistency or prove the records false. Yet in this connection he seems to realize the importance of emphasizing the truth of his words and says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away." In the great passage before us he foretells the fate of Jerusalem, the sufferings of disciples, the struggles of nations, the rise of false Christs, and the signs of the end. He portrays the near and the distant future, when he the Son of Man shall come, when he shall send forth his angels who shall gather

together his elect from the four winds "from one end of the heaven to the other" (Matt. xxiv. 31).

109. Jesus concludes the representation here with the parable of the virgins and that of the talents, followed by his graphic description of the last judgment wherein he himself occupies the throne and assembles mankind before him. As the fitting sequel and climax to the above remarkable claims over the forces of Providence as they operate in human history, we find Jesus at the very last commanding his disciples to evangelize all nations, coupled with the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). He had previously proclaimed himself the Lord of history: "This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. xxiv. 14). A pleasing incident indicates that Lordship in another light. Concerning the anointing at Bethany he says: "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." This prophecy is fulfilled as I pen these words as it has been in a thousand ways in Christian history. To sum up, Jesus predicted in outline the spiritual history of the race and claimed that his own was the hand upon the helm guiding to the destined haven.

110. We must next indicate briefly Christ's relation to the forces of nature. For behind Providence is another world of forces. The cosmic order is as

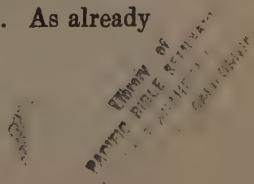
real as the Providential, and indeed a part of it. The recorded relation of Christ to nature is clear. The miracles of the blighting of the fig tree, the multiplying of the loaves and fishes upon two occasions, the walking on the water, the stilling of the tempest, and his ascent from Olivet, to say nothing of the draught of fishes and the healings of all kinds and the raisings from the dead and his own resurrection appearances, are clear evidence of his relations to the world of natural forces. He is, according to the record at least, their Lord. Nowhere have they overcome him. "Be muzzled," was his command to the howling tempest, which obeyed him. So always nature yields to his will whenever conflict arises between it and him.

The world of evil forces in like manner is subject to his sway: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke x. 18). This was in connection with the preaching of his Gospel. Evil spirits are subject to him whenever these oppose the onward progress of his work.

111. Mark in the next place Christ's relation to mankind. He certainly accepted the title of Messiah of the Jewish expectations, though far from their ideal as to the Messianic character (Matt. xvi. 17; Mark xiv. 61, 62). He was descended from David on the human side, though the expression, "Son of David," Christ employs only once where he propounds a question and raises a difficulty about it (Mark xii. 35). The favorite title which Jesus applied to himself was Son of Man. This much discussed title of

Jesus, whatever else it means, relates Him to the entire race. He is the universal man, one in sympathy with every man. In the title there is an "infinite sense of brotherhood," of oneness with the race. He thus becomes the representative and ideal of humanity, identified with it in interest and destiny. Passionately devoted to the service of men, he uniformly employs his miraculous power not for himself but for them.

112. But observe next this paradox: His detachment from men was as marked as his identity with them. He is apart from them. Nay, he is for them the object of faith in religion. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matt. xi. 28, 29). He accepted the worship of men. After the incident of the walking on the water the record says: "And they that were in the boat worshipped him, saying, of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Matt. xiv. 33). So also after the resurrection they worshipped him (Matt. xxviii. 17). After Peter's great confession, Jesus says: "On this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18, 19). As already



indicated, the rewards and punishments of the last day are the result of service rendered to or withheld from Christ himself. But there is no need to multiply passages. Jesus is himself the center of his religion. It is he and not his teachings that is the primary object of devotion. To follow him exhausts duty. To reject him is to be destroyed. His self-assertion in the religious sphere is absolute. Nothing can be added to his words to exalt him to a higher place in his office towards humanity. Again we quote from *Ecce Homo:* "He considered the ultimate and highest decision upon men's deeds, that decision to which all the unjustly condemned at human tribunals appeal, and which weighs not the deed only but motives and temptations and ignorances, and all the complex conditions of the deed—he considered, in short, heaven and hell to be in his hand."[3]

113. Next, we ask, what of Christ's relations to God? Hitherto we have confined our attention to the synoptic Gospels. We need not seek elsewhere now for a clear answer to the above question. One fact, however, needs to be noted. Jesus expressly forbade premature announcement of his highest claims, doubtless for prudential reasons. Doubtless also he desired that the significance of his person should dawn upon the disciples through his manifestation of himself in word and deed. He would not impose it as a dogma of authority. His ideal was that his revelation of himself should become their discovery of him.

3 Seely.

This explains his reticence in Matthew, Mark and Luke. But observe the facts of his manifestation.

His unbroken fellowship with God, his God-consciousness, is an outstanding fact in the record. From the age of twelve at least, his sense of God's fatherhood appears. It is one of the supreme notes of his doctrine. Another is his claim to be the Revealer of God to man. Here we come upon one of the chief ends of his mission.

Especially consider his assertion of knowledge, power and authority in a striking passage: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Matt. xi. 27). His omnipresence seems to be taught in clear terms: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). So also in the passage quoted, "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." We need only refer again to his asserted power to forgive sins and the exercise of the power, and to his repeated declaration that he is to judge the world. We note, however, his statement: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). Observe also that in the next verse he commands disciples to be baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Here the Son is co-ordinate and equal with the Father and Holy Spirit. Finally, he

was murdered for blasphemy because he made himself equal with God. Thus the Jews understood his claim to be the Son of God. He does not deny but acknowledges the charge of equality. A word would have set them right if they were wrong (Matt. xxvi. 63-66). Did he go to his death "for a metaphor," as one has expressed it? Did he suffer himself to be murdered for a slight misunderstanding of his claims?

114. To complete the representation of Christ as contained in the first three Gospels we should note that from the outset of his ministry his plan was definitely outlined before him. There is nowhere a sign of wavering. The view that he aimed first at a temporal Kingdom and later abandoned the idea is wholly without warrant. Why? Because first in the temptations after his baptism he repudiates temporal power. Secondly, because in his earliest preaching the conditions of membership in his Kingdom are spiritual, repentance and faith. The combination of these two conceptions, that of Kingdom with the outcast virtues of the ancient world, repentance and faith, was itself a marvel either of folly or of originality. The issue proved it to be the latter. Jesus repeatedly predicted his death and resurrection. The indications are numerous that he knew the end from the beginning. Certainly from his baptism onward his plan lay before his mind in clear outline, and in no particular does he waver from his steadfast course.

115. Consider also lastly that so far as the record

narrates Jesus Christ entered the world by a miracle, and left it by a miracle, and lived and moved in an atmosphere of the supernatural in much of the intervening period, indeed in all the period of the public ministry. The credibility of miracles is not in question here, but only the contents of the record as presented in the Gospels. This concludes our setting forth of the facts as to Christ. We must consider in the next chapter the meaning of these facts. We have here data sufficient to serve as the basis for a generalization. We have premises, at least, on which some kind of an argument may be constructed. If we have done no violence to the records as we have them, at least our premise will be undisputed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MEANING OF THE PICTURE.

116. Jesus Christ is the center of the struggle. The case for Christianity is won or lost according as he stands or falls. The argument in this division of our subject seeks to show the reality and power of his claims. In this and several succeeding chapters we consider the facts as set forth regarding Christ in the preceding chapter and in other parts of the New Testament representation. In later portions of the book we shall consider the Christ of experience and the Christ of history. We deal here with facts and their interpretation. If we pervert the facts, or err in classifying them, or if we are wrong in inferences from them, we shall be open to attack. Our method, however, will accord with the principles of scientific reasoning and induction. The principle of causation and of law in the moral and personal realm will underlie all we say.

117. The only hypothesis which adequately accounts for the representations of the synoptic Gospels is that Jesus was a supernatural Person, possessing attributes and powers above those of ordinary men, who entered the world for the redemption of man from sin. This bears directly upon the doctrine of

the Trinity. But we leave the Trinity out of our consideration here. It is a doctrine distinct from that of the Person of Christ and should not be confounded with it. We proceed now to apply the above hypothesis to the material we have gathered from the evangelical record as presented in the preceding chapter.

118. (1) This hypothesis alone reduces to unity and consistency the portrait of Jesus in its various parts as set forth by the evangelists. Each evangelist combines the parts in a different way, but all the essential features appear in each. The beauty of the moral character and teaching, the miracles, the exercise of superhuman powers and functions, along with a lowliness and simplicity in his manner of life—these elements all appear in each of the Gospels. Viewed apart from the hypothesis we have adopted these elements are extremely discordant. To be a prophet was no new calling in Israel; and like a prophet Jesus spoke God's truth to men. But Jesus went further. He spoke not merely for God, but as God. He claimed and exercised the function of Lawgiver. His "Verily, I say unto" no prophet adopted as his mode of utterance. Again, to point men to God as the fountain of life would have been a lofty mission for a religious teacher, but to offer himself as the adequate supply of all spiritual needs was on a totally different plane. Yet Jesus said: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Jesus might have adopted the role of the greatest of all

God's messengers which past history had brought to men without doing violence to our ordinary sense of fitness. But to proclaim himself as a new starting point for history, and as the central force in its future course, leaves us without a precedent. Our astonishment is greater still when, coupled with the most explicit declarations that he came to reveal God, he offers himself as the object of the worship of mankind. These are a few only of the elements which on any theory, save the one we have adopted, are hopelessly discordant, but which fall into unity the moment they are viewed in its light.

119. Consider also this fact, that in a series of relationships we discovered a remarkable consistency in the representations of Christ. When he forgave sins it suggested a function as to moral law of which sin is a violation. We found accordingly that he asserted the claim of Lawgiver. As Lawgiver it was in accordance with the fitness of things that he should be the King in the new Kingdom he came to found, and so he declared himself. But to be sovereign of a world-wide Kingdom involved control of Providential forces. These he calmly assumed. This in turn involved still higher powers, and we found that in all his collisions with the forces of nature and of evil he controlled and guided them to his ends. The tacit assumption in all the above was that he sustained a unique religious relation to mankind, including that of final judge. His sayings are filled with assertions that he is the religious finality for man. Nothing

short of a divine nature will answer as the background of all the preceding claims. Accordingly we found explicit declarations of powers and attributes nothing less than divine.

Parallel with each of the above claims was another on the human plane. Sinlessness as man was coupled with the forgiveness of sin. An example of obedience to law was coupled with the assertion of the prerogative of King and Lawgiver. His power over the forces of Providence and nature was accompanied by a normal human life in harmony with the forces of both realms. The exercise of divine attributes was combined with a steadfast refusal to employ them for himself which remains one of the greatest marvels of his career.

Let it be carefully noted that the above somewhat systematic and cumulative outline of the qualities and attributes of Christ is the writer's arrangement of the material found in the Gospels. The records, however, do not present the material in a formal way. But the fact that what the records say is capable of this exhaustive and systematic arrangement is a striking and significant fact in itself. In explanation it should be noted that the career of Jesus was under the control of his redemptive purpose. Formal teaching as to his Person rarely appears. It comes out incidentally, rather, and thus constitutes the most convincing kind of proof. It shows what were the assumptions underlying all Christ's work. It reveals the background. That his divine claims can be so

completely gathered from the brief synoptic records is convincing evidence of these claims. The horticulturist seeking to produce a practical artistic effect in the arrangement of all the flowers of a given department of the kingdom of flowers would not arrange them as a botanist would classify them; because the artistic and scientific ideals are not identical. But the test of his success would be both artistic and scientific. The eye would be pleased and the botanist also would be able to find materials for a complete classification. So with the artless and simple narratives of the life of Christ. His practical purpose of helpfulness is the leading note in them. Yet the attributes of the supernatural Being come into view in the most natural way.

120. Think also of the unity and consistency of the miraculous element in the account of Christ. It is said that the naturalist by the use of the laws of proportion can reconstruct ideally the skeleton of an animal belonging to an extinct species from the data furnished by a single bone. So with the miracles of Jesus. The Virgin birth, whatever else may be said about it, harmonizes with the ascension from Olivet. The latter is the only fitting sequel to the resurrection. The resurrection, in turn, was the only vindication which, after the crucifixion, could save Christ's previous claim to divine sonship and avert ruin for his cause. The miracles of the public ministry, on the supposition of a supernatural Person, are the normal expression of the powers resident in his na-

ture. They were the sparks emitted by the central fires within. The supernatural elements in the life of Christ are of a piece throughout. The most sensitive artistic faculty cannot find an incongruity in them. It will be observed that we are here not discussing the question of miracles as such, but pointing out simply the unity and consistency of the miraculous elements in the records. This is entirely independent of the other question which we consider in a later chapter.

121. Think next of how the unities above sketched were borne in the consciousness of Jesus. It is doubtful whether we may understand this consciousness as completely as some attempt to show. But the facts warrant our doing so partially. Consider, then, the problem of unifying in consciousness the seven-fold relationship pointed out in the previous chapter: To sin as its pardoner; to moral law as legislator; to the moral kingdom as king; to Providence as its Lord; to the forces of nature as Master; to the race as the sufficient object of religious faith and final judge; to God as equal in attribute and function. Add to the above the problem of preserving in consciousness the unity of life-plan and purpose without wavering to the end. Complete the difficulty for consciousness by trying to maintain the supernatural role through the public career until death. Now who shall assert that any mere man was equal to the task? What consummate actor or impostor ever approximated such a role on the stage of real life? Moreover,

what literary artist ever depicted a character so unique and transcendent out of his own imagination? Yet according to the synoptic record Jesus unifies in His consciousness, speech, and actions all the above discordant and unparalleled elements with the greatest ease and naturalness. The Gospel story runs as smoothly and beautifully as a clear brook in the sunshine. The hypothesis that he was the supernatural Person he claimed to be alone serves as a principle large and strong enough to bind all the facts together. He was Son of God, and Son of Man, and he was the Messiah of Israel. The offices and characters implied in these titles were blended in a matchless and transcendent harmony.

122. (2) Consider again the closely related point, the interdependence of the parts in the representation of Jesus. This also demands the supernatural hypothesis for its explanation. Note the interdependence of the sinlessness and the Virgin birth. No teaching of science is more explicit to-day than that heredity is a force in the production of character. Some even speak of "the brute inheritance" of man as his yet dominant trait. How will the opponents of Christ's supernatural claims, who concede his moral purity, reconcile the latter with the above teaching of science? Again, He himself declared that his resurrection was to be the chief "sign" among all his mighty works. His public ministry, his claims to be the only interpreter of God, and himself to be the end and aim of religion for man, demanded mira-

cles as attestation. The claims and the miracles are bound up together. Then, too, the moral quality of the life and the teachings are bound up with the moral quality of the miracles. If the miracles are later accretions to the authentic record of the moral life and teachings, how comes it that the motive, end, and result in the miracles wear the guise of a moral purity and elevation equal to the most beautiful and divine of the moral teachings? Miracles were the deed of which the Gospel message was the word. In act Jesus served men, so far as the record goes, through miracles. Without these he was a preacher but not a doer of the word. The problem raised by the miracles of the Gospels is not of the bare supernatural works; but rather of those works plus the moral message, plus the divine claim of Christ. Add this, also, that the record of the miracles is bound up with the record of the remaining portion of the portraiture. Strauss even went so far as to say that we must accept these supernatural features of the records or deny that we have any knowledge of Jesus. Consider further how the claim of Jesus as ethical teacher is dependent upon his religious function. That is, if he was wrong in letting men worship him, how could he be right in teaching men the way to please God? How can we eulogize him as the proclaimer of the beatitudes and the golden rule, and condemn him for inviting the race to come unto him for rest, and predicting that the race would stand before him for judgment? Why praise the music that

lures men to heaven and deny that the player brings to his task a heavenly skill?

123. (3) Consider also the originality and vitality of the picture. Jesus lives before us as we follow him through the Gospel record. Not only is this life unparalleled in its moral beauty and grandeur. This also may be said: It bears no trace of being an imaginative production. As has been well said, idealized characters as described in literature are very vague. They do not affect us with that strange persuasiveness of life which we discover in a faithful biography. Dr. Robertson Nicoll says: "George Eliot in her last novel, *Daniel Deronda,* suggests a parallel between her hero and the Redeemer approaching Israel, and tries to make him an ideal character; but, as has been said, he is as feeble and colorless a character as can be, and was well enough described by Mr. Hutton as a 'moral mist.' Nothing credible, nothing memorable, nothing clear is recorded of him. It is true also that the lives of the saints are hard to write, for they also are historically ineffective. The divine communion weakens the personal and positive element in them, and the self is drowned." And again: "It is almost a law in literature that any portraits of the ideal in the least degree satisfactory are closely transcribed from life. . . . The wonderfulness, the originality of the character described in the Gospels, the minuteness, the freshness, the detail of the whole portrait, prove that it is drawn from life."[1]

124. (4) In the next place we must consider our

hypothesis in relation to the moral grandeur of Jesus. At this point it almost looks as if the believing and the unbelieving world might at length reach an agreement, so nearly unanimous is the verdict of friend and foe of the Christian religion. A brief sketch is all that is possible.

125. Men do not weary of pointing out the symmetry of moral character and union of opposite traits in Jesus. Take them first on the plane of the less heroic and passive virtues. Where does humility shine with such a radiance as in him? Who among the sons of men were ever so "meek and lowly in heart?" Did ever weary humanity feel a touch so tender? Did patience ever conquer so splendid a Kingdom? Did modesty and gentleness ever find so complete an incarnation? Or self-denial ever master a life so completely?

Over against these lowly virtues note the heroic ones. "All power has been given unto me," he said. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," was his own hot blast of judgment. Speaking of himself he said if this stone fall on a man it will grind him to powder. He alone was Lord and Master, the disciples were brethren. What mortal is it that hurls out this challenge, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" He it was who was filled with an ambition to rule the race and predicted His coming on the clouds of heaven surrounded by angels.

126. The union of opposites in perfect balance and consistency appears in Jesus. Other men are

fragments. He is the complete man. He is weary and asleep on the boat as any tired apostle might have been; but he stands up and with a voice of power stills a tempest. He weeps with the other broken-hearted ones at a grave; but with a divine voice calls forth the dead Lazarus. He yields to His captors as any culprit might have done; but works a miracle to restore a severed ear and rebukes the rash disciple who smote it off.

Then, too, consider his life of unselfish service. There is no variation in the successive scenes. Read the Gospel of Mark, for example. He rebukes the fever and it vanishes, he touched the leper who bore about his "death in life," and commanded the demoniac who bore about his "hell in life," and the poor victims were set free. The supernatural power he never uses for himself. He holds it as an incidental thing and so employs it. No wonder this trait of self-restraint coupled with boundless power has been called the "masterpiece" of Jesus. His aim was redemptive. He would radically cure man of sin. Unwaveringly to the end he pursues the redemptive purpose and gives his life to effect it. And how sublime the end. See him in the garden yonder. "Into the woods my Master went, clean forspent, forspent," sings Lanier. But "out of the woods" the Master went "and he was well content." For there he had wrestled and conquered. He bore the world on his heart, and on the cross in the great deep of shame he

calmly prays for his murderers: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

127. Then, too, how gracious was his teaching concerning God. God is the Great Father. His heart is love, and yet a love which acts on principles of righteousness. The most exquisite and satisfying of all doctrines of God came from his lips, whom some have declared an impostor or deluded in his teaching concerning his own relations to the divine nature. Man, too, is wonderfully exalted in this moral revelation of Christ. He is unspeakably precious in God's sight. The hairs of his head are all numbered. The world is not equal to him in value. Says Doctor Fairbairn, speaking of Christ's doctrine of God and man: "God is the Father, everlasting in his love. Love was the end for which he made the world, for which he made every human soul. His glory is to diffuse happiness, to fill up the silent places of the universe with voices that speak out of glad hearts. Because he made man for love he cannot bear man to be lost. Rather than see the loss he will suffer sacrifice. Sacrifice to him will become joy when it restores the ruined, but loss to man will be absolute, for losing himself he loses all. So the Great Father loves man in spite of his sin, in the midst of his guilt, loves that he may save, and even should he fail in saving he does not cease to love. In the place we call hell eternal love as really is as in the place we call heaven, though in the one place it is the complacency of pleasure in the holy and the happy which seems

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like the brightness of the everlasting sunshine or the glad music of waves that break in perennial laughter, but in the other it is the compassion or pity for the bad and the miserable which seems like a face shaded with everlasting regret, or the muffled weeping of a sorrow too deep to be heard. That grand thought of a God who is the eternal Father, all the more regal and sovereign that he is absolutely Father, can never fail to touch the heart of the man who understands it, be he savage or sage."[2]

CHAPTER IX.

OPPOSING THEORIES.

128. The moral grandeur of the evangelical portrait, as before intimated, has profoundly impressed the unbelieving mind. A few quotations are added by way of illustration of the statement. The first is a passage from a book which, when it first appeared, was regarded by many as one of the most deadly of the attacks upon Christianity. In *Supernatural Religion* we read: "The teaching of Jesus carried morality to the sublimest point attained or even attainable by humanity. The influence of his spiritual religion has been rendered doubly great by the unparalleled purity and elevation of his own character. . . . He presented the rare spectacle of a life, so far as we can estimate it, uniformly noble and consistent with his own lofty principles, so that 'the imitation of Christ' has become almost the final word in the preaching of his religion, and must continue to be one of the most powerful elements of its permanence."

129. Renan, whose writings about Jesus have attracted attention throughout the civilized world, and who went so far as to assert that Jesus was influenced by his environment to adopt immoral means to propa-

gate his teachings, has said: "Jesus is in every respect unique, and nothing can be compared with him. Be the unlooked for phenomena of the future what they may, Jesus will not be surpassed. Noble Initiator, repose now in thy glory! Thy work is finished, thy divinity established. A thousand times more loving, a thousand times more loved since thy death, than during the days of thy course here below, thou shalt become the corner stone of humanity, insomuch that to tear thy name from this world would be to shake it to its very foundations. No more shall men distinguish between thee and God."[1]

Professor G. J. Romanes in his little work *Thoughts on Religion,* published after his death, clearly shows the movement of his mind towards Christian faith. He says: "Those in whom the religious sentiment is intact, but who have rejected Christianity on intellectual grounds, still almost deify Jesus Christ."[2] Romanes himself became a Christian believer before his death, after suffering long a scientific eclipse of faith.

J. S. Mill in his *Essays on Religion* makes a series of remarkable statements about Christ coupled with the denial that Christ ever claimed to be equal with God. He says that the Divine Person which Christianity has ever held up as the standard of excellence is available for the absolute unbeliever, and can never more be lost to humanity. "It is the God incarnate, more than the God of the Jews or of nature, who, being idealized, has taken so great and so salutary a

hold on the modern mind." He says whatever else criticism may take away, "Christ is still left, a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the benefit of his personal teaching." Repudiating the view that Christ is not historical, he says: "The tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels, and may have inserted all the miracles, which he is reputed to have wrought. But who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee; certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort; still less the early Christian writers."[3]

130. Strauss, who certainly could not be classed with evangelical believers, says that Christ is "the highest object we can possibly imagine with respect to religion, the Being without whose presence in the mind perfect piety is impossible."[4]

Goethe says: "I esteem the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendor of a sublimity proceeding from the person of Jesus Christ, and of as divine a kind as was ever manifested upon earth."[5]

Matthew Arnold, who denied the supernatural and poetically described the Syrian stars as looking down upon the grave of Jesus, wrote: "Try all the ways of righteousness you can think of, and you will find that

no way brings you to it except the way of Jesus, but that this way does bring you to it."[6]

131. Another writer equally opposed to orthodox Christianity, Mr. Lecky, has said: "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which through all the changes of eighteen centuries has filled the hearts of men with an impassioned love, and has shown itself capable of acting in all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions; has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the highest incentive to its practice, and has exerted so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists. Amid all the sins and failings, amid all the priestcraft, the persecution, and fanaticism which have defaced the church, it has preserved in the character and example of its Founder an enduring principle of regeneration."[7]

132. These quotations and concessions might be indefinitely extended. The moral beauty and excellence of Christ and his teachings have so fascinated mankind that it is extremely rare that his sinlessness has been questioned; even then in almost every instance to meet a difficulty rather than as a result of evidence. In this connection a significant fact is to be noted. It is this: The growth towards unity of view as to the moral perfection of Christ has kept pace in recent years with the growth of critical study

of the records. The more closely these records are inspected the less are men able to discover flaws in his character. Not only so; this growing unanimity as to Christ's moral perfection offsets in a striking manner the current objection to miracles on grounds of natural law. The growth of the disposition to recognize a moral miracle along with an indisposition to concede those in the physical order is, to say the least, quite suggestive. It raises the question whether after all the physical miracles do not bear a relation to the moral which many objectors have overlooked. It also raises the further question whether these objectors have squarely faced the issue as to Christian miracles. This matter will be taken up when we come to consider miracles.

So far, then, faith and unbelief are practically one in the moral estimate of Jesus. But if the moral estimate be correct, then the Christian's religious estimate of him must be equally so. If he was a pretender as miracle-worker, and as the object of worship for men, and a pretender in claiming divine attributes, can he be other than a pretender as a moral teacher? The old alternative stands. Christ was God or else he was a bad man.

Again, if he were deluded as to his relations to the divine nature, in making himself equal with God, how comes it that his general doctrine of God as Father, and in other respects, has become by common consent the highest possible conception of God? Why so wondrously wise about God's nature and character

and so strangely ignorant as to his own relations to God? Nothing but an antecedent objection to the idea could blind men to the evidence for the fact of this claim of Christ. Or to put it in a slightly different way, if the effects, that is, the moral teachings and the teachings about God's character are considered genuine and have been verified by experience and history, can we logically explain the cause, that is the supernatural Person, as delusion or imposture? The case can be put perhaps more strongly still: Can the teachings as to morals and God's character viewed as abstractions be considered true, the result of the highest wisdom, while his teachings viewed in relation to his own Person be regarded as the result of delusion or imposture? For let it be kept in mind that he was himself the ethical motive, and is himself a constituent part of his doctrine of God. Christ's teachings cannot be bisected in any such way. Eighteen centuries have proven that the doctrine of the Person is bound up indissolubly with the ethical ideal in practical experience, as Part III of this book will show. They are related in the same organic way in the record. Our hypothesis then explains all the facts. No other does. We must now briefly note some of these hypotheses, although the replies to them have already been anticipated and two of them briefly touched upon.

133. Is the portrait of Jesus an ideal production? Did some religious and literary genius or geniuses create it? The declaration of Rousseau that it would

require a Jesus to forge a Jesus at once comes to mind. But why this single literary phenomenon in an age of commonplace? Why no similar productions in later ages? So life-like and real is this creation of literary genius, if it be such, that we have as a result a paradox unparalleled. Says Henry Rogers, speaking of the supposition we are considering: "The very qualities which should have warned the world that it was a mere ideal on which it was gazing, have not prevented its mistaking it for reality; the painter has so overdone his part that the stupid world has vehemently contended and generally believed that the painting is no painting at all; nay, rather than believe it such has been willing to receive all those supernatural traits with which it is fraught, as also copied from reality."[8] The theory is absurd. A difference of opinion about a painting has not convulsed the Roman empire, sent thousands to the martyr's stake, regenerated modern Europe through Luther, projected the modern missionary enterprise.

134. But was the portrait the result of gradual accretions of myth around an original genuine nucleus? This again is wholly untenable. For such a fictitious picture as above described which has deceived the world into the belief that it was a copy of life is more wonderful still as a result of myth-making through generations. We have seen the remarkable unity in diversity. Whence came this remarkable co-operation of mythologists? How came they to remain so true to the moral nucleus and so wild in add-

ing the supernatural to it? Or how came they so miraculously to leave the original moral nucleus untouched, if this part of the painting is true? What restrained them so completely at one point and gave them such license everywhere else? Doctor Row illustrates the absurdity of the theory that the picture of Jesus is a result of the work of independent literary artists by referring to the celebrated painting called the "Marriage at Cana in Galilee," in the Louvre at Paris. "It consists of a considerable number of figures in a common grouping, all of which blend into one another, and form an harmonious unity of conception. Assuming, then, that the picture is not the work of a single artist, but of many, each of them, in accordance with the above theory, must have spontaneously painted a number of figures, from which when a selection had been made, and the selected figures were placed side by side, this celebrated picture was formed. Such an account of its origin is incredible."[9] It is incredible that a portraiture exhibiting such unity in diversity, such moral grandeur, such unselfishness, a character so diverse from the age in which it arose, and this in a narrative or group of narratives which are so true to the historic environment, could have arisen as a conglomerate from many sources. Besides the foregoing, one fact alone destroys the hypothesis, viz., the teaching and missionary labors of the apostle Paul. His earlier epistles are the oldest New Testament writings. They exhibit the action of the evangelic por-

trait as a historic and religious force in the world, *before the Gospels were written.* The regeneration of society by the Jesus of the Gospels had been inaugurated before the record of his life was made. This we take up later and let the statement of the fact answer for the present.

135. But the tendency of the age was to deify men. It was a superstitious age when men were ready to believe anything, it is urged by some. Jesus was deified by his followers as Roman emperors were sometimes deified. This theory forgets that Jesus was murdered by Jews for blasphemy in making himself equal with God. The supreme sin to a Jew was for man to claim such equality. In later Judaism the tendency was constantly to put God further and further away from man. Whatever might have been true elsewhere, such a deification could never have arisen among the Jews as the result of a common tendency.

136. Other theories we need not now consider. We have in our treatment anticipated practically all the theories. The theory that Christ was a product of evolution will be considered in a separate chapter. Two or three brief general remarks apply to all the opposing theories hitherto examined: (1) They break the unity of the evangelic representation and leave essential parts unaccounted for. (2) They fail to account for the origin of the portraiture itself, regardless of the question as to an original to which it corresponds. (3) They fail to account for the unity and harmony of the three Gospels we have studied, as in-

dependent witnesses to Christ. If they are connected with each other, a very striking unity is preserved. (4) These opposing theories contradict each other. They mutually devour one another. Mill said miracles were introduced later than the biography of Jesus. The author of *Ecce Homo,* on the contrary, Professor Seeley, asserts that if we deny the record of miracles, we must deny knowledge of Jesus. Renan said that Jesus lowered his moral standard under the pressure of his environment in order to make his cause succeed. Others unable to grant moral delinquency think Jesus was insane or under a delusion as to some of his claims.[10] Many opponents think the supernatural claims of Jesus the accretions of later years. J. S. Mill denied that Jesus ever claimed to be divine, while one objector unable to admit that such a teacher was insane and unable to discover other grounds for the charge asserts that Christ was immoral because he permitted himself to receive divine honors.[11] Thus the theories contradict each other. (5) The reason is that no one of them adequately accounts for all the facts involved. The hypothesis we have adopted does account for those facts without exception and reduces all to harmony and order.

137. Now, so general is the consensus of opinion as to the sinlessness of Jesus, even among unbelievers, and so feebly is the charge of moral delinquency sustained when it is made, that this point may be considered as virtually conceded on all hands. If, then, Jesus was sinless we stand in the presence of a moral

miracle. This moral miracle forms an easy passage to those of a physical kind, especially as all the latter themselves bear the moral stamp. The divine claims likewise cannot be detached from the moral; they are indeed an organic part of the moral manifestation of Christ. Discerning students see that the whole Christian claim is bound up with the moral character of Christ. If this is sustained, the entire fabric stands; if it goes, the whole falls in ruins.[12] Sidney Lanier does not exaggerate the convictions of Christ's followers, nor the destined goal of the thinking of men in general, when he thus writes:

"But thee, but thee, O sovereign seer of time,
But thee, O poet's Poet, wisdom's tongue,
But thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labour writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumour tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's,—
O, what amiss may I forgive in thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ."

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST AS SPIRITUAL CREATOR:

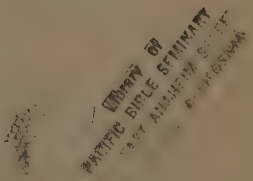
PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

138. There are many who imagine that the destiny of Christianity is bound up with the final results of the science of criticism as applied to the books of the Bible. As a matter of fact the process of criticism, important and valuable as it is, is but an incident in the history of the religion of Christ. The reason for the statement is that a resistless force in operation in the world to-day cannot be brought to a standstill by the view men may come to hold as to the literary record of its origin in the past. Yet this is assumed by many. If the opinion should be generally adopted that Newton's account of gravitation is erroneous in many respects it would not affect the operation of the force of gravitation in nature. The facts of astronomy are not dependent on critical theories about gravitation. So the facts of the Christian religion are not dependent on critical theories as to origin.

139. We may consider Christ in either of two ways: The first way is to regard him as the subject of four brief literary memoirs written about two thousand years ago. These writings are imperish-

able. Their survival to the present and their hold upon mankind show this, no matter what critical views may arise concerning them in the course of the ages. Yet there are countless numbers of people who would not surrender their faith in Christ, no matter what conclusions critics might reach as to early documents. They have independent and direct experience of him. They are, as has been said, like the Samaritans who believed first because of the woman's word, but afterwards because they saw and knew Jesus for themselves. The other way of considering Christ is to view him as a spiritual Creator. We may ask not what did Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John say about him, but what has he accomplished in the world? One thing he is accomplishing to-day in the hearts and lives of his followers is the impartation of inward peace and rest, and strength for life's burdens and duties. On the theatre of the world's life he is slowly transforming all our western civilization, and already the advance guard of his spiritual army occupies the frontiers of his Kingdom in the orient. These facts will be presented in some detail in later chapters. At present we note it in passing, that we may keep it in mind as we return to consider his early work as spiritual Creator.

140. Look again, then, at the first three Gospels. Whence came they? They may be properly regarded as the creation of Christ himself through his followers. If the Christian explanation of him is the true one, his incarnation meant more than the eternal



Word dwelling in the man Jesus. It meant the mastery of the inner life of other men by his truth and ideals, through whom these should be propagated. It meant an unbroken succession of such men through time. This and nothing less would permanently introduce him to the race of men, and incarnate him in humanity in an effective saving way. This is the deep significance of his notable saying to Peter after the great confession: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18). Through the operation of the divine Spirit the revelation of the Messiah had now become the discovery of the disciple. The grasp by Peter and others of the meaning of the Christ was the foundation of the spiritual Kingdom. The Messianic truth was incarnated in a living man. This, indeed, was part and parcel of the purpose of the Incarnation. Incarnation came short of its end so long as it came short of this.

Now, as already pointed out, the Gospels are best explained on the above theory. Christ's character and his revelation and his ideals were discovered by his disciples, particularly the little group which were near him, known as "the twelve," and who, with one exception, afterwards became the Apostles. In due time these men or others in close intimacy with them produced the gospel records. These records are a monument to the prophetic power of Jesus. They mark his mastery as a teacher of men. He not only announced a message, but he also "caused men to

know" that message, which is the final test of a teacher's work.

141. Let us see now how nearly unbelievers come to granting our contention at this point. Recall, for a moment, some of the quotations of the last chapter. Let us remember also that it is universally conceded that Jesus wrote no book. Not a line from his pen exists on earth to-day. The author of *Supernatural Religion* said "Jesus carried morality to the sublimest point attainable by humanity;" Renan said men would no longer "distinguish between him and God;" Mill said, "Whatever else criticism may take away, Christ is left;" Strauss, that "He is the highest object we can imagine with respect to religion;" Matthew Arnold, that no other way "but the way of Jesus does bring men to righteousness."

Now, it is clear from these and many similar declarations of unbelievers that they believed Christ and his teachings were discoverable through the writings, not of Christ, but of others. In other words they concede the crown of prophetic preëminence to Jesus in two respects: First, as to the superlative excellence of his teachings, and, second, as to the accuracy with which he impressed his own "frame of mind" upon others. The assumption of these men is that Jesus did succeed in conveying his thought to men. The burden of proof is upon them to show why in moral teachings his success was so marked, while as to miracles and the doctrine of his Person he failed so completely. For they arbitrarily deny their trust-

worthiness as narrators of these other things, while defending it as to moral teachings. With one hand they grant to Jesus by their concessions the supreme crown as teacher, and then take it away with the other, by their denials. Truly, we must conclude that, with all his moral beauty and excellence, Jesus was a pitiable failure as teacher even, if he did not succeed in guarding his message against corruptions which have led to his own exaltation as God, and to the existence through eighteen centuries of a system of idolatry of which he is the center. No; Jesus is the creator of the Gospels. They are his handiwork.

142. It is not proposed, however, to let the above conclusion stand by itself. We can show Christ's title to the office of Spiritual Creator in another way. We can go behind the Gospels. This will now be done. We are to consider not merely literature which Christ has through his followers created, but also results in the life of humanity. The synoptic Gospels, it is agreed by competent scholars, were written about the years 60 to 70 of our era. The epistles to the Romans, First and Second Corinthians and Galatians, are almost universally conceded by destructive and rationalistic critics even to have been written a number of years earlier. The character and career of the Apostle Paul and the results he achieved appear clearly in these epistles. In them what do we find? We shall find that Jesus Christ as a spiritual force in the world had begun to operate and produce results long before the records of his life were

penned. We shall find also that there is a striking agreement between this earlier Christianity and that which we find in the later records of the Gospels. The aim of the present chapter should be clearly grasped: The epistles of Paul named above are conceded to be the oldest historical documents relating to Christianity which we possess. They were written by the man named Paul at the time they themselves indicate that they were written, say before the year 60 of our era. It is now to be shown that in a multitude of respects these writings exhibit the same Christianity with that found in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Then it will be shown that Christianity in these epistles appears not merely as a record but as a transforming force in the world. So extensive a plan within the limits of a chapter must, in the nature of the case, be developed only in outline. In some instances references by chapter and verse will not be given, especially where these are most abundant and conclusive. But the reader can easily verify for himself.

143. Consider first Paul's personal relations to Christ. He claims repeatedly to be an Apostle. He was separated from his mother's womb unto this work. He was directly appointed by Christ and was independent of other apostles. The qualifications of an apostle, personal vision of Christ, and the signs of an apostle, miraculous works, were his (Rom. i. 1; Gal. i. 11, 12; 1 Cor. ix. 1; Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12, compared with Luke ix. 1 ff.; Mark xvi.

15-18). Thus Paul's office and form of activity conformed to the plan of Jesus as set forth in the Gospels.

144. The doctrinal agreement of Paul with the synoptic Gospels is clear at many points. The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God was a fundamental teaching of Jesus. Harnack and others have made it almost the exclusive and exhaustive message of Jesus. Professor G. G. Findlay says without exaggeration concerning the Fatherhood in Paul: "This principle is its tacit presupposition and basis throughout. A true disciple, Paul has assimilated in this fundamental article the essential teachings of our Lord."[1]

Paul and Jesus are in complete agreement on the doctrine of Love also, which grows out of the doctrine of Fatherhood. "But I say unto you love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you." So spoke Jesus. Paul says: "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female." Says Professor Sanday: "This universalism (as to Love) which underlies all the teaching of Jesus is put in a definite practical form by Paul" in the language just quoted.[2]

Again, the doctrines of repentance and faith are conspicuous in the teachings of both Jesus and Paul. Especially does Paul insist upon faith as the condition of justification throughout his controversy with the Judaizers. "Repent ye and believe the Gospel" was the early and constant message of Jesus.

145. "The Kingdom of God" was a leading teaching with Jesus, as we have seen. Repentance and faith were conditions of entering the Kingdom. It was a spiritual Kingdom. The poor in spirit were blessed because theirs was the Kingdom of Heaven. So in Paul: "The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17). The Kingdom does not have the same relative prominence in Paul, but its various marks, or at least the greater part of them, reappear (see 1 Cor. xv. 24 f.; 1 Cor. vi. 2; Rom. xiv. 17).

Another doctrine of Jesus attains great prominence in the writings of Paul, the doctrine of the Church. Jesus predicted (Matt. xvi. 18) that the gates of hades should not prevail against his church. In Paul the church becomes the organ for the continued manifestation of Christ on earth, and his apostolic career was devoted to the preaching of the Gospel and the establishment of churches (see salutations in Epistles, and 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; xii. 11-28; 2 Cor. iii. 3, any many other passages).

So, also, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Paul corresponds with the synoptic predictions of Jesus on the gift of the Spirit. Turn to any portion of Paul's epistles and his doctrine of the Spirit appears. Compare with Luke xi. 13.

146. If the reader will turn to the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Romans and compare these with the Sermon on the Mount, he will be

struck with the resemblances. Compare especially Rom. xii. 14, "Bless them that persecute you, bless and curse not," with Matt. v. 44, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." Compare Rom. xiii. 7, with Matt. xxii. 21; and Rom. xiii. 9, with Matt. xxii. 39, 40. Dr. Sanday says regarding the passage under consideration in Romans, after exhibiting the verbal agreement of the three parallel passages cited: "To these verbal resemblances must be added remarkable identity of teaching in these successive chapters. Everything that is said about revenge or about injuring others is exactly identical with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount." Professor Sanday goes on to quote with approval the following from Knowling: "Indeed, it is not too much to add that the Apostle's description of the Kingdom of God reads like a brief summary of its description in the same Sermon on the Mount."[3] For references by Paul to the words of Jesus, compare 1 Cor. vii. 10, with Mark x. 9; and 1 Cor. ix. 14, with Luke x. 7.

147. Again, Paul reproduces with substantial accuracy the teachings of Jesus as to the Lord's Supper. In 1 Cor. xi. 23 f., we read: "For I received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks he broke it, and said, this is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup," etc. Compare these words of Paul with those of Jesus in the corresponding passages in the Gospels (Matt.

xxvi. 27; Mark xiv. 23; Luke xii. 17, 20), and observe how directly the thought of Paul reproduces that of his Master.

Then, too, as to the saving significance of his death Jesus foreshadows most clearly the doctrine of forgiveness and justification so fully elaborated in Romans and Galatians. Compare especially the following: Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.

It is well known that Paul's great chapter, the fifteenth of 1 Corinthians, is one of the strongest proofs of the resurrection of Jesus.

148. We are next to consider Paul's conception of his own career in relation to the plan of Jesus for the future of his Kingdom. In the following passages Jesus forecasts the future. It is to be coextensive with the race. Expansion is to be the watchword of its history. Now the call and mission of Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles, and the universalism of his theology, clearly connect him with the purpose of Jesus towards the human race (see Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15; compare with Gal. i.). The Gospels leave us to expect a movement out from Jerusalem and Judea to the ends of the earth. A leader is needed to grasp the spirit and aims of the Master. Paul exactly meets the expectation. On this point even the critics of the well-known Tübingen school are agreed. Paul and Jesus alike thought of their Gospel as destined for mankind. In Paul it would seem as if the spiritual energy of Jesus was trans-

mitted. It was a case of persistence of force in the spiritual realm.

149. Of very great importance is the next point of agreement between Paul and the Gospels. Paul's doctrine of the Person of Christ recognized clearly his sinlessness (Rom. vii. 7, 8; viii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21). "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21). Little in Paul's writings reflects the events of the ministry of Christ on earth. Yet the facts of Christ's life are evidently assumed by Paul. They are the necessary background of all his teachings concerning Christ. What are those teachings on the crucial point, Christ's supernatural claims as to his Person and work? Do they agree with Matthew, Mark and Luke? On this point there can be no question. Begin with a most striking statement in Romans ix. 5, where referring to the Jews and their privileges Paul says: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all God blessed forever." The margin suggests a possible alternative reading, and the passage has been much discussed, but Professor Sanday, one of the sanest and ablest of modern interpreters, says on this passage: "This description of the supreme dignity of him who was on his human side of Jewish stock, serves to intensify the conception of the privileged character of the Jewish race."[4] There are other equally explicit passages. In 1 Cor. v. 5, 6, we read: "For though there be that are called Gods whether in

heaven or on earth; as there are gods many and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." Again in 2 Cor. viii. 9, Paul refers to the riches of Christ and his becoming poor that we might become rich, evidently pointing to his pre-existent state and agreeing with the great passages as to the pre-existence and self-emptying of Christ in Philippians and Colossians. He is referred to as King who must reign till all enemies are subjected unto him (1 Cor. xv. 25). No one can say Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 3). Christ is the image of God (2 Cor. iv. 4), whom Paul preaches as Lord. The human and the divine in Christ are closely associated. He was born of the seed of David after the flesh and declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead (Rom. i. 3, 4). Faith in Christ justifies. Christ is the new Adam, the head of the race. The future destinies of mankind are in his hands. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain waiting for the redemption that is in Christ. Christ is to be final judge: "We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body" (2 Cor. v. 10, compare Matt. xxv. 31 ff.). The striking and convincing fact appears in Paul's undisputed epistles that the doctrine of Christ's Person was nowhere in dispute. Judaizers did not raise this question, nor did others when these epistles were written.

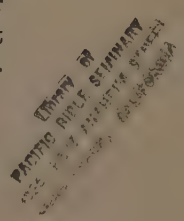
150. Most suggestive is Paul's personal experience of Christ. The resurrection and the cross are central in his experience and doctrine. "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me" is the way he describes his conversion (Gal. i. 16). "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, and yet no longer I but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20) are his words which exhaustively set forth his spiritual experience. Every thought is brought into captivity to Christ. In short, Christ is the center of Paul's spiritual universe. His epistles relate every activity and hope of Christian men and women to Jesus the Son of God, the Saviour, the Lord and Redeemer of mankind.

151. Consider further the results of Paul's labors: Christianity given to the Gentile nations; a line of churches established from Antioch through Asia Minor and Greece to Rome; the new spiritual brotherhoods, local democracies, planted throughout the Western world in strategic points as the seed plot for future civilizations. This fact is of vast significance.

Another fact should be noted at this point. Many modern interpreters of all schools admit that Paul taught the pre-existence of Christ. This as a matter of pure exegesis. Many of them deny actual pre-existence on various grounds. They hold that it was ideal pre-existence which was meant, or it refers to a heavenly man, or some other explanation is offered. The point here is that pre-existence of some kind is conceded almost universally to have been taught by Paul.

152. Now consider the point at which we have arrived. Every important aspect of our Lord's life and teaching, except the Virgin birth, reappears in Paul's undisputed epistles. We are in all we say assuming only the historical trustworthiness of the four epistles referred to. Theories of inspiration are for the purpose in view here left entirely out of account. We find, then, that in the earlier Gospels Christ, the sinless Son of Man and Son of God, claiming to be Lawgiver and Lord, the object of the religious devotion of mankind, who is to be ever present with his disciples, predicts the establishment of a world-wide Kingdom through the preaching of his Gospel. In Paul we find this prediction beginning to be fulfilled. To-day in our own world we find the same movement in force slowly changing the face of human society. If Christianity had perished from the earth save as a tradition we might ignore it. But to-day Christ's own words find fulfillment in the irrepressible conflict which rages around his name. Paul's mission and career was the initial stage of Christ's creative work in the world at large.

Let it be recalled now that the synoptic Gospels were written after the epistles of Paul which we are considering, and after his career was virtually if not entirely completed. Now in Paul we find a threefold reproduction of the same portrait of Jesus found in the Gospels. (1) That image apears in the inner experience of Paul as an individual. The inner Christ of Paul's spirit walks before us in his recorded ex-



periences as the same Christ essentially who steps forth from the page of the three Gospels in the fullness of life. (2) Christ's image also appears in the teachings of Paul's epistles concerning his person and work, and (3) it reappears also in the redeemed lives of Corinthian, Galatian and Roman Christians. It is, indeed, the higher spiritual Christ, but essentially the same Christ.

Can we draw any inference from these facts? Surely Paul, who wrote before Matthew, Mark and Luke, had some source of information which agreed with the sources of the evangelists. Surely, also, the mythical theory of the composition of the Gospels cannot hold. There was not time for myths to grow. Besides, Paul's epistles, by common consent, are no myths. Moreover, if Paul's Gospel had contradicted the common fund of knowledge about the Lord, he would have been contradicted. The controversy with Judaizers shows this. The absence of contradiction of Paul by other Apostles is strong proof of the correctness of his views as to the relation of his Gospel to Christ's teachings.

153. There is one striking difference, however, between the manifestation of Christ through Paul in the three-fold manner pointed out, and his manifestation in the Gospels. Yet even this difference Christ himself foretold. In the synoptics Christ is in the prophetic mood, so to speak. The shadow of his approaching death is upon him. He foretells the preaching of remission of sins in his name to the

ends of the earth after his death. In Paul he has become the triumphant Christ. The conclusion of the synoptics bends back and dovetails into the beginning of the Pauline mission.

Observe, also, that Christ predicted that his influence was not to be that of a dead teacher, but of a living presence, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The remarkable fact appears that Christ as a living presence was more real to disciples after than before his death and resurrection. Conviction of this now becomes a conquering power; before it was a wavering and doubtful estimate they placed upon him. Paul's spiritual autobiography is an outline portrait of the risen Jesus who was enthroned in the apostle's heart, bringing every thought into captivity to his will. Professor Harnack says: "The Pauline theology, this theology of a converted Pharisee, is the strongest proof of the self-complete and universal power of the influence of the person of Jesus."[5]

What, then, is our conclusion? It is this: Jesus Christ was a spiritual cause actively at work in the world rearing his Kingdom before the earliest Gospels were written.

154. If, as with a few recent writers, it be urged that Paul was the creator of Christianity, and that the Gospel of Mark, for example, was composed to corroborate Paul; that we know little of the real Jesus; that Paul obtained his idea as to a pre-existent Christ from Alexandrian philosophy—then Paul must be accounted for. A man with a delusion as to his own

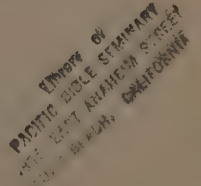
inner life, ascribing his experience to Another whom he worships and exalts, becomes himself the great Initiator in religion. The worshipper of a phantom on this view becomes the transformer of the ages by teaching the duty of worshipping a phantom.

Then, too, this view divides the opposition. Mr. Lecky and others said it was Christ, not Paul, who transformed the morals of Europe. Christ said it was to be himself, according to the Gospels, and Paul declares with vehemence it was Christ. Millions of men to-day echo Paul's vehement assertion and support it by their testimony as to Christ's transforming power in the experience of their lives.

155. In the foregoing discussion Paul's later epistles and the Gospel according to John have not been introduced as evidence. They are most conclusive on all the more important points in debate. But so are the earlier Gospels and the earlier group of Paul's epistles. A recent writer well says: "No words in the Fourth Gospel concerning our Lord's character and prerogatives are loftier than those in the synoptic Gospels. We believe we are justified in saying that the synoptists would be more difficult to expound without the light of the Fourth Evangelist than the Fourth Gospel without the aid of the synoptists."[6] One is not obliged to subscribe absolutely to this statement as it stands, but it is not far from a correct view. The later writings just referred to for many reasons the present writer accepts as genuine, in full view of critical objections,

In them the doctrine of Christ's Person is stated in most explicit terms. In John he is the eternal Logos who is also Son, distinct from and yet co-equal with the Father. He embodies in himself the Light, Life and Love which are of the very essence of the divine nature. In Hebrews also, in the first chapter, he is set forth as "the effulgence of his (God's) glory, and the very image of his substance." In the first chapter of Colossians he is before all things and in him all things hold together. In the second chapter of Philippians he is described as having been in "the form of God," and "on an equality with God," as having emptied himself and as taking the form of a servant. Moreover, in all these passages the doctrine is stated in an uncontroversial manner, though evidently intended to meet heresies in some cases. Practical rather than controversial ends are in view. The fact of Christ's transcendent nature is quietly assumed. No proof could be more convincing that it was universally accepted by writer and readers.

156. There is indeed difference between the representations of the synoptic gospels as to Christ's Person and these writings of Paul, John and others. But the difference lies in the various modes of apprehending the same truth. There is also an underlying unity. The doctrine of Christ's Person may be likened to a sphere. One pole, the human, appears in the synoptic Gospels, where, as man, Christ is identified with the race. The other and divine pole is in the Fourth Gospel, pointing upward to the



depths of the eternal nature of God himself. The Pauline teachings are as lines of longitude connecting the poles, or parallels of latitude encircling the sphere. But everywhere on the sphere, whether at the poles or at points on the encircling lines, the *curve* is the same. Attempts to empty the synoptic sayings of their divine content of meaning have ever failed. They spring back through sheer inherent force into the curve of divine significance.

Let us now gather up our discussion and bring it to its conclusion. We began with the statement that the only adequate explanation of certain early facts of Christianity is to be found in the view that Christ as a living presence became a spiritual Creator in the life of individuals and societies. We saw that as such he wrought a mighty work in and through the apostle Paul. We saw that this occurred before the Gospels were written, and thus we reached an independent basis for the Christian position not so much in the teaching of Christ as in his action. It was the action of Christ which energized in Paul and in his writings, and which converted a narrow Pharisee from being intellectually and spiritually a citizen of Judea into a citizen of the planet, itself a work more than human. It was Christ's action as spiritual Creator which inaugurated the first missionary enterprise. If Mr. Lecky is right in crediting Christ with transforming European morals, it was through a converted Pharisee with matchless daring in whom Christ crossed the Helle-

spont and laid his creative hand on Western civilization. Again it was Christ in action who created our earlier Gospels. The necessity for them grew out of the resistless might with which he was already re-creating men in his own image. The passion for him as an ethical and historic ideal was born of his regenerating presence in the inner life of men. The lines of his image on the treacherous page of memory would have grown dim forever but for this energy within. Stimulated by that energy the likeness became vivid again and reappears on the pages of the Gospels in undying beauty and lifelikeness, and in matchless unity and originality.

157. Finally we do not judge of the early creative work of Christ as distinct from his work in after years. All the problems about Jesus stretch through the centuries. Two thousand years of time bind all the diverse elements of these problems into unities which to-day dauntlessly challenge solution save in the Christian way. For Christ is yet at work. The early energy is unspent. Four lines of continuity may here be indicated in proof of the statement. (1) The first is the continuity of experience. The Christian type of experience is as real and distinctive to-day as when Paul wrote Romans and Corinthians. The same Christ, the same Spirit, the same kind of transformed lives are in evidence all about us. (2) The second continuity is of ideas. Experience begets thought. Christ's Person must be construed by men who abandon all for him, who live

for him and die unto him. The Pauline and Johannine and evangelical modes of regarding his person reappear in scores of creeds and symbols to-day. So with the continuity of other distinctive ideas. (3) The third continuity is of witnesses. Experience and ideas master men. They become witnesses in the deep New Testament sense. In Madagascar, in China during the Boxer uprising, the poor, the meek, the peacemakers, the pure in heart in our own times still go to the stake for him and, dying, sing:

> "Nor tongue can speak, nor heart can frame,
> Nor can the memory find
> A sweeter sound than Jesus' name;
> O Saviour of mankind."

(4.) The fourth continuity is that of spiritual community. The gates of hades have not prevailed against his church. There have always been men and women with his love ruling their lives. A common experience, a common view of his person, a mystic inner bond and deathless hope have drawn them into fellowship in work and worship.

CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST AS PRACTICAL IDEALIST: ETHICS AND RELIGION.

158. We are to consider next the work of Christ in the sphere of ethics and religion. The two are inseparable in his teachings. When dealing with the ethics of Christianity it is very gratifying to find one point of common standing ground for unbelievers and believers. It is conceded that the ethics of Jesus are the highest yet given to the world. Few will now dispute this. On this very account, as it appears to the writer, the usual method of stating the argument from Christ's ethics for the truth of Christianity is defective. To set forth the ideal excellence of the moral teachings of Jesus as a means of proving their divine origin scarcely meets adequately the situation. It is quite interesting but equally inconclusive to compare Christian ethics with other systems, as Confucianism, Greek or Roman ethics. The reason is, as above stated, that Christian ethics, it is generally acknowledged, are the highest. But this conclusion by no means implies on the part of unbelievers that the ethical teachings are of divine origin in the Christian sense. It may be held that Christian ethics are simply the highest yet evolved.

It is not intended in the above paragraph to assert that the argument from the ideal excellence of Christian ethics is without force. Far from it. From the Christian standpoint this alone, without the aid of other arguments, ought to carry conviction to men. Indeed, the assertion has been made that the argument from ethics is the most direct and fundamental proof of Christianity. But, for the reason already pointed out, this view cannot be maintained. That is, it cannot be maintained if we use the ethical teachings of Christ merely as an argument. If we make them comprehensive enough to include faith in Christ, and if we regard them as an evangel, a Gospel and an appeal to the moral and spiritual nature of man, which secures a moral response, herein indeed do we find one of the most direct and fundamental proofs, but not otherwise. This, however, is not the argument from ethics in the ordinary sense as employed by the Christian apologist.

The plan of the present chapter, then, will be to set forth first, in as concise a manner as possible, the superiority of the Christian ethical ideals, that they may leave their appropriate impression upon the mind. Thus the way will be prepared for the further argument which it is hoped may prove more nearly adequate.

159. Professor Stewart, in indicating the moral tests of a religion, says we will properly ask: (a) Whether it understands the moral condition to be dealt with; (b) whether it is formed on a right

method, being based on a clearly apprehended principle and constituting an organized whole; (c) whether its precepts are the highest possible; (d) whether its morality is applicable to all mankind; (e) whether its standard is the highest as to individual virtues and in their combination; (f) whether it is provided with sanctions or motives sufficient to ensure attention to its precepts.[1] In all these respects he finds that Christianity abundantly meets the tests.

The following points may be successfully maintained in regard to the ethical and religious teachings of Christianity:

They are the highest yet made known to the world. Professor Fisher has an extended and instructive comparison between Christian ethics and the philosophic ethics of the Greeks and Romans.[2] At certain points the teachings of Seneca approximate those of Jesus. But in motive and in fundamental quality they fall far below. The highest morality of the Greeks never attained to the idea of equality and brotherhood among men. Romanes quotes J. S. Mill's saying that an unbeliever even cannot "find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life," and then adds, "Contrast Jesus Christ in this respect with other thinkers of like antiquity. Even Plato is nowhere in this respect (as to spirituality) as compared with Christ. Read the dialogues and see how enormous is the contrast with the Gospels in respect of errors

of all kinds—reaching even to absurdity in respect to the reason and to sayings shocking to the moral sense. Yet this is confessedly the highest level of human reason on the lines of spirituality."[3]

It is but another aspect of the above point to say that Christian ethics are by far the most radical. Sin is traced directly back to the inner motive and thought. The Sermon on the Mount has often been pronounced visionary and impracticable by reason of its direct opposition to the natural impulses of the human heart.

Again Christian ethics are in a very profound sense characterized by internal unity and harmony. The Christian elements of character combine into a moral type which is as distinctive as anything in the world. It is indeed endlessly varied in individuals, but the essential Christian traits may be clearly recognized in all cases where it attains even an approximate maturity. Some of these are: (a) The passion for righteousness; (b) the love and service of others at personal cost; (c) devotion to the person of Christ.

160. Again the moral and religious teachings of Christianity are effective in their appeal to men. As this point comes up further on it is merely mentioned now. Closely related to it, however, is the further statement that these teachings are of permanent validity. Romanes was much impressed by this aspect of Christian ethics. He says: "One of the strongest pieces of objective evidence for Christianity is not sufficiently enforced by apologists. It is the absence

from the biography of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge—whether in natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere—has had to discount. This negative argument is really almost as strong as the positive one from what Christ did teach. For when we consider what a large number of sayings are recorded of him, it becomes most remarkable that in literal truth there is no reason why any of his words should ever pass away in the sense of becoming obsolete."[4]

161. We must note also the universality of Christ's teachings. It is a marvel that Jesus avoided casting his teaching into temporary moulds; that they are so comprehensive as to apply in every sphere and relation in life; that they are not rules but principles, flexible and expansive, so that the growth of society never finds them unequal to its needs. It is still further marvel that he advanced no political teachings and yet has slowly transformed political ideals until to-day a world's peace and a universal brotherhood are at least subjects of vital interest in the thought of mankind. The Jews of Christ's day wanted political teaching, and Mohammedanism is breaking in pieces on the rock of its own political ideals. Christ rose above his environment and foresaw the danger.

It must be kept in mind also that Christ combined religion and ethics as they had never been combined before. He thus brought the highest possible sanctions to the man struggling to realize the ethical

ideal. His doctrine of God is the highest conceivable by the mind of man.

162. Passing now to our chief consideration we may ask: How shall we best regard the ethical teachings of Jesus as an evidence of Christianity? The answer is that we should view them in relation to his Person and to his purpose as a whole. The main point may be stated thus: Jesus came not to teach a system of ethics but to inaugurate an *ethical enterprise.* This distinction properly observed will clarify several confusing and difficult phases of the subject, as will be seen presently. But, first, what was the ethical enterprise of Jesus?

The reply to this question may be stated in various ways. Christ's enterprise was to introduce into the world an ethical force which should actually transform men. It was this more than it was a teaching addressed to men. These men were to form a society; this society was to grow through the ages; its end was moral character in the highest possible form. In brief, then, there was an ultimate ethical aim or *final cause* before the mind of Jesus. He introduced an *efficient cause* to secure the end. What then was this final and what the efficient cause? The final cause in the individual character was the recreation of man ethically in Christ's image. The final cause in the world at large was the Kingdom of God. The efficient cause of both was Jesus himself.

163. But this ethical enterprise of Jesus was more than ethical. First of all it was redemptive. Sin

must be dealt with before an ethical transformation could begin. Man must have a new heart. The fundamental relation of the soul to God must be first dealt with. Here it is that the ethical runs back into the religious life of man. Now it was in a personal relation to Christ himself that both the religious and ethical result were to be realized. A few citations of Scripture only out of many will be given. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. xvi. 25). In the same context Christ predicts his second coming in glory when he shall render to every man according to his deeds. In the epistles we find that the experience of New Testament writers and readers is cast in the same mould. "We have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). "If that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you ye also shall abide in the Son and in the Father" (1 John ii. 24). So in many passages the hope of seeing Christ leads to self-purification. Faith in Christ secures victory over the world. An indefinite number of like passages could be cited from Peter and Paul. In Paul's writings servants are to obey their masters, and children are to obey their parents, "in the Lord." Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. In short, Christ himself is so organically connected with the entire New Testament ethical and religious ideal that that ideal is destroyed by any attempt to view

it apart from him. It ceases to exist save as it exists in him, and in him not merely as a historic character who lived and died but as a living force in the heart and life.

164. Such was the ethical enterprise of Jesus. Consider now the difficulties in his way. Ideals are not wanting among the reformers of the ages. The peculiar point about the highest of them in the ethical realm is that they remained ideals. Seneca could dream even of the Fatherhood of God. But he never penetrated into the secret of making men God's children. The idealist was not a practical man. The chief difficulties of Jesus may be summed up in two. The first was in man: How to win man to a moral life and leave him free. I speak with reverence: this is, so far as we can see, the great problem of God. This is his burden. Divine power is not equal to this task. For mere power cannot change moral character.. Power in some way must become persuasion. Free choice must respond. How did Jesus propose to reach the will? The second difficulty was in the world. How could he establish a spiritual empire which should transform the world ethically without becoming entangled in earthly empires? How shall he isolate his kingdom unto himself and pour redeeming forces into men's lives?

165. The above were in part the difficulties. How did Jesus propose to meet them? Herein appears his wisdom and skill, his unmatched sympathy and insight. The first and foremost of the spiritual

means employed by Jesus was a despised virtue among the nations. I refer to repentance. Along with it faith was a primary condition of entrance into the Kingdom. What infinite tenderness and pity are suggested by the first word of the Gospel message, repentance. Professor James asks: "In what did the emancipating message of primitive Christianity consist but in the announcement that God recognizes those weak and tender impulses which paganism had so rudely overlooked? Take repentance: the man who can do nothing rightly can at least repent of his failures."[5] The same writer goes on to say that Christianity took this repentance and made it the one power within us which "appealed straight to the heart of God."

Christ's cause was outcast in the early centuries. So the outcast cause seizes upon the outcast virtue and appeals to social outcasts who could do nothing but repent and believe. On this foundation Christ reared a Kingdom which to-day is becoming world-wide. "Not many wise, not many mighty" were called, though there were some from the beginning. God chose the foolish and base and despised things to confound the mighty. So Paul wrote to the Corinthians. Thus with an outcast cause Jesus approached the world at the best possible point of contact for its moral transformation.

166. Another chief means employed by Jesus was his church. The gates of hades could not prevail against it he predicted. The church was the society

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of repentant and redeemed men, held together by spiritual interests only. Christ himself was its center and bond. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). Thus his people were to be preserved from the world's contamination. The church became the organ for the advancement of the kingdom. Its functions are spiritual only. They greatly err who seek to make it the means of conveying directly all kinds of secular benefits to the world. This is to weaken it in its distinctive work and mission, which is to call men to repentance and faith and to sanctify them in character and conduct. Yet it leavens all society in every sphere. The modern doctrine of separation of church and state is the belated return of the world to Christ's ideal, after fifteen centuries of forgetfulness.

167. Christ reached the wills of men through two agencies, preaching and the Holy Spirit. Paul said, Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord we persuade men." Persuasion through the message of the witness and preacher indicates Christ's method with the free wills of men. The doctrine of grace means divine power exerted through the Holy Spirit not to compel action but to induce it by free choice.

Through the above agencies Christ planned to subdue the world unto himself. An ethical kingdom was to arise and sweeten all life. His ideals were to pervade all society. Such was his ethical enterprise. No conception at once so simple, so bold, so

original and so sublime ever entered into the mind of man before or since. He has been executing his purpose until to-day. He was not an idealist merely. He was a practical worker. He has gone slowly because men are slow of heart. But he has gone surely. As Professor Bruce remarks: "In vain does a railway engine start off at lightning speed, and reach its destination in an incredibly short time, if it leave the train behind. . . . The law of love dictates a slackened pace. Take the train along with you."[6] With what infinite patience has Jesus, the leader of men, drawn after him the slow-going race for two thousand years.

That the above is a correct interpretation of the ethical plan of Jesus is confirmed by the following consideration:

168. (a) It explains the use he makes of existing moral teachings. We are not concerned to prove his originality in this respect. Sabatier credits him with no original teaching, not even the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God.[7] Harnack thinks that the Fatherhood of God, the kingdom and the higher righteousness comprise his essential teachings.[8] These writers do not appear to have correctly stated the case. They fall far below it.

Professor Harnack's account is scarcely complete. God's Fatherhood is the religious kernel lying at the heart of Christ's teachings; the higher righteousness is the result in individual character of the spiritual forces at work, and the kingdom of God the result

in history. But the underlying principle for the realization of all three is the unique and original teaching of Christ: *dying in order to live.* This is the unifying ethical bond of Christ's "system" or teaching. It has been well said, as the science of chemistry is organized around the idea of *affinity,* and political economy around that of *value,* and astronomy around that of *gravitation,* so Christian ethics and the Christian religion are the working out of this principle in relation to God and man. The cross is the historic expression of it, and Christ is its embodiment. He introduced it into the world and keeps it alive among men.

But pass this by for the moment. Christ utilized what ethical truth he found and combined it into a new and glorious unity with his own. As practical idealist he made it effective for the first time. Nowhere does the golden rule exist in a form so exhaustive and positive as he states it, and he first made it a living force in the world.

(b) Again, our view explains the apparent one-sidedness of his ethical teachings. As practical idealist he sought to strengthen humanity on its weak side. Mr. J. S. Mill complains that the heroic and political virtues are wanting in Christ's teaching. But this in an error. The heroic and political virtues are implicit in those teachings at many points. No one ever taught so high a form of courage, both physical and moral, as did Jesus; and his doctrine

of universal love involves patriotism of the purest type.

(c) Again, our view explains the absence of system in Christ's ethical teachings. The elements of a system are there. But his interest was not logical, but practical and spiritual. The unity he sought was that of a spiritual society, not of logical coherence.

169. Our argument then is this: In conception and in execution the ethical enterprise of Jesus was nothing less than divine. The appeal to history and to personal experience as proof of the claim that Christ is efficient cause in its execution will be made in an extended way in later portions of this volume. If the continuity and success of the Christian ethical enterprise can be shown to be due to any other cause than the personal living Christ, immanent through the Holy Spirit in his churches, then our plea loses its force. But the chief difference and distinct mark of this enterprise is not so much the superiority of ideals as the superiority of the motive power employed for their realization. In the union of the highest ideals with the most efficient moral forces, in variety and magnitude of ethical achievement, in its imposing and resistless might as a historic movement, and in vital and dynamic power to-day, two thousand years after its inception, the ethical enterprise of Jesus is incomparably superior to any other the world has known.

CHAPTER XII.

MIRACLES: A BOND OF UNITY.

170. A miracle is an event making known to the senses the presence of a personal power above the physical and human plane, working towards a moral end. This definition is far from perfect, as are all attempts to define miracles. But it is sufficient for the present purpose and in a general way will furnish a clear conception as a basis for the discussion.

The miracles of Jesus are the subject of the present chapter. All the evidence for those miracles cannot be compressed into fifteen pages. Some of it has already appeared in the account of the supernatural person of Christ. More will be forthcoming in the next chapter when the crowning miracle, the resurrection of Christ, is considered, and yet more in the chapter on the authenticity and credibility of the Gospel narratives.

171. The defender of the Christian miracles has no quarrel with science. He rather invokes the aid of science. He has, however, a word or two with that class of men whom Professor James so well designates as "sectarian scientists." Briefly described, these are investigators in science who have an interest in one class of facts only, those of physical nature. They are slaves to one method of investiga-

tion, that which deals with matter and motion. At the same time they are tyrants in spirit towards other searchers for truth in other realms. Realms of investigation in which spiritual and personal facts appear are to them irrelevant. Ethics and religion are inconvenient, nay, they are an impertinence. Why? Because they do not lend themselves to the methods which assume in advance that all the facts of existence are physical. An intense distaste is thus begotten which results in an atrophy of the faculties which are employed to discern spiritual facts. The physical and the spiritual are opposite poles of the sphere of truth. Their attitude is as unreasonable as would be that of explorers of the North Pole who should despise those who set out on a voyage of discovery to the Antarctic regions, on the ground that the latter are an unreal world, merely because most of the recent activity has been in the former direction. The follower of Hume, who insists on the sole existence of "impressions" and "ideas," and the Spencerian, who denies everything except "matter" and "motion"—all who shut their eyes to a part of the facts of the world—are provincials in science. Equally provincial are those who turn their backs on religious phenomena as having no place in the interests of thinking men.

Not so, however, the true scientist. He is open to truth from all sources. Yet even he sometimes deals in an inadequate manner with Christian miracles. They are regarded as bare marvels, which seem to

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violate natural law. This is not the way in which the New Testament presents them. Their total moral and spiritual framework must be recognized. In accounting for miracles they are no more to be detached and isolated from their general setting in a great and marvelous spiritual movement than a comet, when it appears, is to be studied apart from the general system of astronomical laws and forces of which it is a part. Men who tear away the Christian miracles from the moral and spiritual fabric into which they are woven and judge them thus have simply never faced the real issue presented by New Testament miracles. Hence their arguments and objections are not pertinent to the question in debate.

172. What is the proper attitude of science towards miracles? As the order of nature is for the most part uniform, science will very naturally scrutinize the evidence for miracles closely. But she has no right whatever to deny their possibility. To examine the evidence and conclude according to it is her sole duty. This point needs to be clearly grasped. The belief in miracles proceeds upon a certain view as to the unseen force behind the universe, viz, that it is a personal God. Science as such has no opinion on this point. Her sole task is the observation of facts and their proper classification. She reduces the co-existences and sequences of nature or society or religion to general laws, and seeks to describe their action in an exhaustive manner.

173. It is philosophy rather, and not science, which passes behind the scenes and reasons about the causes which are at work there. Science, indeed, furnishes the data from which philosophy builds her structures, but is non-committal as to ultimate causes. Of course, a scientist may also be a philosopher, but the two rôles must not be confounded. A man must not claim the authority of science for a statement when his only warrant is a philosophic deduction from facts furnished by science.

The object of the foregoing remarks is to define the rights of the parties to the controversy about miracles. The theologian or other Christian thinker, whether expert in science or not, has an equal right with the scientist to philosophize about the facts which are made known by science. The materialist has the intellectual right to infer the non-existence of God, but other men have an equal right to the theistic inference from the facts of nature. Science as such, then, is not committed against the Christian view of the world which underlies the doctrine of miracles.

174. Again, philosophy as such has no warrant for dogmatizing against the possibility of miracles. Hume said miracles are both impossible and incredible. They violate the order of nature; hence they are impossible. They contradict experience; hence no amount of testimony can establish them. His view has been met so often and so successfully we need not linger over it. It overlooks the fact that one kind of experience is that the testimony of a suf-

ficient number of competent witnesses to an event is trustworthy. If such testimony exist as to miracles, then one kind of experience would offset another according to Hume's principle, and thus we might have conclusive proof of both sides of a contradictory statement.[1] Reason can scarcely rest in such a conclusion. Again, if testimony cannot establish a certain class of events—that is, those contrary to experience—then it would follow that anything occurring for the first time would be incapable of proof. Hume's argument is as fatal to the modern theory of evolution as to the doctrine of miracles. For when any new stage of development is reached no amount of evidence could establish it. When life or reason appeared for the first time in the upward course of things "experience" would be wholly against it. Facts, of course, are fatal to arguments. So if Christian miracles are facts antecedent objections count for nothing. There is no philosophic or other ground on which the question of miracles can be prejudged and ruled out of court. Romanes, with his usual fairness, speaking as an investigator outside of Christianity, says: "We are not competent judges *a priori* of what a revelation should be. If our agnosticism be *pure,* we have no right to prejudge the case on *prima facie* grounds."[2] He also says that most of the objections to Christianity are of the "antecedent" kind.

175. Still another attitude towards the New Testament miracles must be noted here. It is now quite

the fashion with some believers in Christ and the Gospels to adopt a half-way position on the subject. The "miracles" of Jesus are regarded as natural events in very large part, if not altogether. The raisings from the dead, for example, are regarded as resuscitations of *apparently* dead persons. One recent work cites a number of such modern resuscitations as examples of what might have been true with Christ.[3] Another argues to show that while the miracles might have occurred, they were according to law in the sense that they were concealed, so to speak, in the natural order and broke forth at the proper moment.[4] There are numerous writers of this school. Some of them distinguish between the supernatural, or God's direct action in the spirits of men, and the miraculous, his direct action on physical nature. They admit the supernatural but deny the miraculous. The aim of these writers is to conciliate science. The doctrine of the divine immanence, or indwelling in nature, is held to be sufficient to account for all things. Miracles in the sense defined at the beginning of this chapter are unnecessary. Indeed, it is urged they are a burden to faith. The appeal of Christianity is moral, not physical. Men who have the spiritual experience do not need the outward "sign" or wonder. Miracles belong properly to the baggage wagon of the Christian army, not to the artillery. It is taken for granted by many of these writers that the older view of the miracles is entirely out of date. One of them says regarding

Dr. Robertson Nicoll's telling little book, *The Church's One Foundation,* that it is *reactionary,* because it insists upon the physical resurrection of Jesus.

176. One needs only to study the method of reducing the New Testament miracles to the naturalistic plane, as employed by these writers, to be convinced of the hopelessness of their task. Nothing could well be more farfetched than their interpretations. By no sort of exegetical ingenuity, for example, can the resurrection of Lazarus be understood as Christ's restoration of an apparently dead man to consciousness and health. Again, miracles may not be needed to *prove* Christianity to the man who knows God by inner experience. But that inner experience renders belief in the miraculous easy and natural. It is, indeed, an experimental sample of the miracle-working power. In both the fact becomes known that a power from without is at work. In this way it is a total contradiction to Hume's contention that miracles are contrary to experience. In their essential nature as the coming of a Power from without they belong to the most inward and real experience of all Christians. Christian experience comes up for consideration in the next division of this treatise, and we would not anticipate the discussion there. But two remarks grow out of that just made as to religious experience being a sample of the miracle-working power.

177. The first remark is that our inner experience

may suggest an analogy according to which we may regard the supernatural in the physical realm. The "miracle" within man in religious experience touches in some mysterious way the springs of conduct, but in no degree violates the "order of nature" within the human spirit. Of this we are conscious. It is a power from without, but it enters according to law and acts according to the law of our being. In physical nature also the miracle-working power may lay hold of matter by a way preordained in the very constitution of matter, without "violating" the order of physical nature.

178. The other remark is that the doctrine of the immanence of God by itself is not sufficient to solve the religious problem. It has a direct relation not only to miracle but to the whole redemptive aim of Christianity. The fact is that the thing essential in miracle, the coming of a force from without, is essential everywhere in redemption. Sin and disorder exist in the world in spite of the indwelling of God. Make the universe miraculous at every point as the advocates of the anti-miraculous Christianity claim to do. Granted that it is all miraculous in their meaning of the word, yet in your supernatural world you have sin. In spite of the continuous outflow of divinity, making grass, tree, star and man partakers of the divine nature, there remain evil and depraved natures and moral despair. Admit further that progress is by stages most minute, yet man is never really lifted higher save by a power which is from

above. The attempt, therefore, to reduce the New Testament miracles to the plane of the purely natural will surely result, if consistently carried out, in doing the same in religious experience. It is vain to attempt to smuggle in the supernatural by way of religious experience and exclude it from the historic Christianity of the New Testament. The extraneous force entering the natural order, which offends in one sphere will also offend in the other. The conclusion from the above is that while the immanence of God is a great and fruitful truth, it is insufficient. By itself it leaves the moral interests of man in the gravest peril.

179. Let us next attempt to state the case for the Christian miracles. We have in a previous chapter discussed theism. The atheist, of course, is not open to conviction on the subject of miracles. The general assumptions underlying the Christian view of miracles are few and simple. They are: First, that there is a personal God, who is good, who cares for man; second, that there is a moral order to which man belongs, and to which human freedom is the key; third, that in the exercise of his freedom man has brought sin and disorder into the moral kingdom; fourth, that moral interests are higher than those which are merely physical. These other assumptions, if theism be granted, will scarcely be denied by any. Now, miracles as a part of a divine movement to restore order, in the Christian view, are the response of God to the above situation.

180. Let it be particularly noted that the advocates of Christian miracles are not champions of chaos in an ordered universe. Those who are jealous for the uniformity of physical nature often imply this. The principle of order to which they are passionately devoted is not less dear to the Christian believer. To the latter, however, it is the moral and spiritual order as well as, but not exclusive of, the physical. The human will in its choice of evil disturbed that order, reduced it to chaos. The need is that it shall become a cosmos. Miracles are the acts of the Lord of that moral order seeking its restoration. New Testament miracles are practically all restorative in character. Disease, death, sorrow and sin are unnatural, abnormal. Christ's miracles restored the normal which these forces had disturbed. They were not violations of an established order. Their chief end and result was to restore. We may not say, with Bushnell, that man is supernatural. He is rather a part of nature. Yet he is the connecting link of nature with the supernatural. As the crown of the natural order he points, through his personality and freedom, to the supernatural Person. The evil act of his free will, which was indeed the violation of an established order, was not a miracle. But miracle is the corresponding right of the divine Person to restore.

181. If the world of men is really a moral world, if there be a moral kingdom at all, it is necessarily

higher than the kingdom of matter. The two kingdoms are not opposed, but lower and higher parts of the one universal kingdom of God. Nature and grace when discerned most deeply are seen to be one. But the kingdom of nature is for the use of the kingdom of grace. Its uniformity and order and its stability are necessary to render it a suitable instrument for the use of the wills of higher spiritual beings, who for aught we know may exist in untold myriads throughout space. Physical nature has been likened to a ball used by a company of boys in a game. It is the medium of their intercourse and contest with one another. "If the ball changed weight, color, density, shape, every moment, no skill could be acquired or evinced in the use of it; there would be no real test in the game and no social commerce of play in the parties using it. Therefore it needed to be so far a constant quantity. So demonstrably, there needs to be, between us and God, and between us and one another, a constant quantity. . . . What we call nature is this constant quantity interposed between us and God and between us and each other—the great ball, in using which our life battle is played."[5] It is impossible to give any satisfactory account of physical nature save this, that it is subordinate to purpose, that intelligence employs it for ends.

182. Miracles, then, from this point of view, would not be violations of the natural order, but only the

use by intelligence of the lower to promote the ends of the higher order. This would involve no disrespect to law, but simply that personality is superior to physical law. A skeptic challenged a believer, in homespun, who was whittling with a jackknife to demonstrate that if he let go the knife it could move in any direction save downwards according to law and under the action of gravity. In reply an upward jerk of the knife lodged the point securely in the ceiling overhead, and thus the challenge was met. Will is as real a force as gravitation.[6] This is not cited as an example of miracles, but it illustrates the truth that a spiritual being can act upon matter in mysterious and unknown ways and produce results directly contrary to those which would follow the operation of purely physical causes. The process by which the will communicated an upward impulse to the knife is as inscrutable as the action of God's will on physical nature in miracles. All the speculative difficulties of the one are also involved in the other.

Consider next that the nature of the Christian miracles is clear indication of their fitness to be a means of accomplishing the restoration of the moral order of God. A number of qualities appear in Christ's miracles which bear upon this point.

183. (1) Notice first their remarkable ethical quality. It is not too much to assert that miracles were Christ's *method of philanthropy*. They were the deed of which the Gospel was the word. They

were employed to bless men in need. They were the expression of love. So far from being mere wonders and nothing more were these miracles, that Jesus repeatedly enjoined silence upon the recipients of the blessing conferred by them. Then, too, they were closely connected with moral renewal. Forgiveness of sin and healing of disease were coupled together in the same act. Christ uniformly kept the moral interest uppermost in the miracles and rebuked men who contemplated them on the lower plane. Unbelief was sometimes the occasion of his failure to work miracles. The miracles were indeed a kind of parables. All of them are intended to teach some truth of the kingdom.

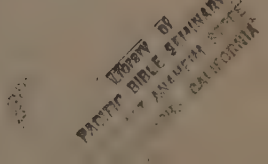
This ethical quality of the miracles was in harmony with the character and mission of Christ. He himself was the great moral miracle. Miracles are the proper "phenomena of his person." They are the laws of his nature. "It is not that the miracles prove the doctrine, or that the doctrine makes credible the miracle," says Canon Gore. "It is rather that as parts of one whole they cohere as soul and body."[7]

184. (2) Again, the miracles of Christ had great value as a means of revelation. We are not to regard them altogether as "credentials" which Christ exhibited to prove his mission. This conception has been much inveighed against, and it is but a fragment of the truth. Miracles are not the chief evidence of Christianity and proof of Revelation. Yet they are

vitally related to that revelation. If God was actually to enter the world to redeem it he might have done so possibly "without observation." The transcendent God might have opened a secret door, as in the birth of Christ, and remained concealed, so far as miraculous tokens were concerned, to the end. But this would have been not a revelation but a hiding of himself. If the entire manifestation could have been explained on the natural plane, the supernatural being concealed, men would have been slow to believe there was anything supernatural present.

Especially did Fatherhood and grace require miracles as evidences of what they were. A fatherhood and a grace which are confined to the ordinary course of nature would appeal but feebly to men. It would have been an impotent fatherhood and grace. But a breaking through the normal course of things showed that as Father manifesting grace through Christ he was not bound. If God is to be Father, in the highest sense, and Christ is to be true Redeemer, then it must appear that they are both within and without nature at the same time and able to control it for redemptive ends.

185. (3) Miracles are usually supposed to offend the intellect. In one view they are its highest satisfaction. They do not disturb but unify the order of the world. They proclaim that the dualism of matter and spirit is not the highest truth. They show that these two things are somehow under the control of one. The spiritual being, who is Lord of nature,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appears in the miracle to answer the upward flights of the reason in its craving for unity and to satisfy it.

But we must now briefly sum up the evidence for the miracles of Jesus, leaving the general discussion as to the Gospel records to a later chapter.

186. (a) We observe first that the disciples were well qualified as witnesses. They were not scholars. They were not, on the other hand, ignorant and unlettered men in an extreme degree. They were plain Jewish business men, able to cope with the problem and difficulties of practical life, and with eyes in their heads. They had no interest in deceiving men about Christ and could not have been themselves deceived during three years of intercourse with the miracle worker.

(b) The testimony of the acknowledged epistles of Paul is valuable. In these the fact of the resurrection of Christ is made the basis of much of the teaching and is reiterated in many forms. The entire spiritual life of believers is regarded as a resurrection life based on that of Christ. Paul says also that he himself wrought the signs of an apostle, which, of course, refers only to miracles (2 Cor. xii. 12). In chapters twelve, thirteen and fourteen of First Corinthians Paul shows that supernatural gifts were common in the church.

(c) The originality of the New Testament miracles is suggestive. They are not copies of other types of wonders. For there are no others like them recorded. The nearest of kin are those of the Old Testament.

But the "miracles" of the Apocryphal Gospels, and of ecclesiastical history, as well as those of Mohammedanism and Buddhism, are utterly wanting in the ethical dignity, the high redemptive aim and use which we find in those of the New Testament.

(d) Again, the account of the miracles could not have been added at a later date after the death of the apostles. They are a part of the warp and woof of the Gospels themselves. Mark, which is very generally regarded as the oldest Gospel, is pre-eminently a miracle Gospel. It teems with them from beginning to end. Critics, even of the destructive school, say Mark furnished the material common to the three synoptic Gospels. In this common material there are not less than eleven miracles.[8] The fact is, as Doctor Bruce shows, unbelieving opinion at first accepted the Gospels as authentic records but explained miracles as *frauds.* When this appeared untenable and began to react they ceased to charge fraud and took refuge in myths of after ages.[9]

(e) Further, we must observe how vitally the Gospel miracles are related to the teachings of Christ. His doctrine of faith is taught in them as nowhere else. So also his teachings as to the Sabbath and on other topics. Mr. Lecky says regarding modern free thought that it "revolves around the ideal of Christianity and represents its spirit without its dogmatic system and supernatural narratives. From both of these it unhesitatingly recoils, while receiving all its strength and nourishment from Christian ethics."[10]

This statement may well be offset by one from the author of *Ecce Homo,* whom no one will accuse of an orthodox bias. This writer clearly saw the fatal result of attempting to dissect the miracles from the living organism of the evangelic record. After speaking of possible exaggerations in the reports we have of Christ's miracles, he says: "On the whole miracles play so important a part in Christ's scheme that any theory which would represent them as due entirely to the imagination of his followers or of a later age destroys the credibility of the documents not partially but wholly, and leaves Christ a personage as mythical as Hercules."[11]

187. The miracles of Jesus, then, are amply supported by evidence. They are an offense only to those who place things above persons, the mechanical order of nature above the moral order. Miracles as Jesus employed them are a bond of unity at every point, not a doctrine of anarchy. The unity of the Gospel records is fatally marred without them. They do not violate but restore the dismembered moral kingdom, which had been broken up by sin. The doctrines of Fatherhood and grace are far from complete without them. They vindicate the conception of the universe as a family, in which persons are bound together by love, over against the conception that the universe is merely a cosmos bound together by physical force. They suggest to the intellect the clew to the final unity of nature and spirit in the Supreme Person. Miracles, then, bring rest to the mind seeking

for ultimate truth by suggesting the bond which secures a moral, theological and philosophical unity in all these ways. They will abide as a part of the New Testament records and of the convictions of believers.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

188. The following are the facts as Christians believe: (1) Jesus died, not in appearance but in reality. (2) His body was buried in a tomb as other corpses are buried. (3) On the morning of the third day he arose from the dead. (4) He appeared repeatedly during forty days to the apostles and other witnesses. (5) Afterwards he ascended to the right hand of the Father.

The chief point of emphasis here is the resurrection. This is the crucial point. What followed is easily conceded if this be established. By resurrection it is meant that the body of Jesus was changed from a dead to a living body. It is not necessary to define fully the nature of his resurrection body. It was certainly not in all respects the same as his body prior to the resurrection. It may have been in process of glorification during the period of appearances to the disciples. It was doubtless to become a "spiritual" body, if not already such. It was to be adapted to his spirit as its permanent abode. But for present purposes this point may be left on one side. We insist now chiefly upon this: the grave of Jesus was emptied of its contents. It was no "resur-

rection" of his spirit merely, which would have been no resurrection at all. What was laid in the grave dead came forth therefrom alive. This and nothing less is the Christian claim.

This supreme fact it is proposed to establish by testimony, the witness of competent and credible men. Meantime, however, we may call it a hypothesis. It can be established in all the ways insisted upon by science in proving hypotheses. It accounts for all the facts. No other hypothesis does this. These facts to be accounted for are as follows: The accounts of the New Testament records, the fact of the moral transformation of the first disciples, and the facts of Christian history since their day. We are not, of course, dealing with mathematics nor with physics. We cannot employ theorems nor apply scalpel and microscope. The Christian origins belong rather to a department of historical science.

189. Men, of course, claim and have claimed that no amount of evidence can prove a resurrection from the dead. What this means is that they decline to believe the best of evidence when it relates to one class of facts. They repudiate evidence valid in all other spheres because of its subject matter. Analyze the contents of the testimony as to the resurrection of Christ and the denial that testimony can prove such a fact becomes absurd. It is a testimony to what? To two facts: First, that a man was dead; second, that a man was alive. Every day in the week the testimony of witnesses establishes both facts. Of

course, in this case it is not testimony that one man was first alive and then dead, nor that one man was dead and afterwards another man was alive, which no one would dispute, but that the same man was first dead and then alive. The simplicity of the facts of the testimony, merely as facts, however, is as great in the last as in the two former cases.

190. The following are some of the tests which may be applied to the evidence for alleged historical facts. They are given more fully in Dr. John Kennedy's excellent treatise, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*. One element of certainty in testimony is that it is from a *contemporary* who had personal and immediate perception of the facts. Another is that the witness *loves the truth*. Sir Cornewall Lewis says: "Historical evidence, like judicial evidence, is founded on the evidence of credible witnesses." He also says the credibility of a witness depends on the four following conditions: "(1) That the fact fell within the reach of his senses. (2) That he observed or attended to it. (3) That he possesses a fair amount of intelligence and memory. (4) That he is free from any sinister or misleading interest; or, if not, that he is a person of veracity." Canon Rawlinson says evidence of the second degree of credibility is that obtained by others directly from eye-witnesses. So also is evidence derived from trustworthy contemporary writings. The cumulative force of evidence should also be recognized. Once more, the validity of evidence in proof of facts must not be determined

by "the weight of the consequences that may happen to depend on them."[1]

191. Consider, first, the evidence of the four Gospels. Each of these gives numerous details as to the resurrection of Christ. The apparent discrepancies as to certain points are a trifle compared with the overwhelming consensus as to the great fact that Christ rose from the dead. The following facts are recorded by all: The death of Jesus on the cross; the request of Joseph of Arimathea, who obtained the body; that it was placed by Joseph in a tomb variously described by the evangelists as "Joseph's own tomb," a "tomb hewn out of a rock," etc. Matthew and Mark state that a great stone was placed in the door of the sepulchre. Matthew and Mark and Luke say that women beheld where Jesus was laid. Matthew records the sealing of the stone and the placing of a guard by chief priests and Pharisees who secured permission from Pilate.

So much for the burial. Then comes the record by all that some women went on the third day at daybreak and found the grave empty. The stone was rolled away. The body was gone. In the various accounts Christ appears to Mary Magdalene; to the women; to Peter; to two disciples walking to Emmaus; to the apostles except Thomas; to the apostles, Thomas being present; to seven of the apostles by the Sea of Galilee; to five hundred brethren on a mountain in Galilee; to James; to the eleven preceding the ascension. Thus Christ appeared, in all

ten times, after his resurrection, leaving out the appearance to Paul. These appearances were under the greatest possible variety of circumstances and conditions. The first five appearances were on the third day after the crucifixion, the day when Christ rose.

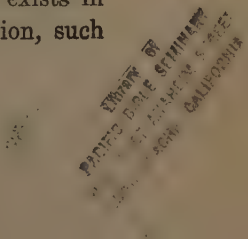
192. Consider the variety of circumstances under which Christ appeared. He sits at table and blesses the bread with two disciples; he had already expounded to them the Scripture. He tells a doubting disciple to thrust his hands into his side to convince himself. He partakes of broiled fish with the disciples by the lakeside. An important fact to be noted is the numerous teachings of Jesus during the resurrection appearances. This makes it impossible that disciples could have merely imagined they saw him. He appears to one disciple alone, to two, to the women, to the twelve, to seven, to five hundred at once. He appears repeatedly in Jerusalem, by the lakeside in Galilee, on the Emmaus walk, on the Galilean mountain, and on the Mount of Olives before the ascension.

On all these occasions and in all these ways the witnesses of the resurrection gained their knowledge. Their eyes were witnesses, for they saw his familiar form. Their ears were witnesses, for they heard the same loving accents of his voice. Their minds were witnesses, because he taught them with the same old authority and power. Their hearts were witnesses, because again their affections were stirred to their depths by his gracious dealings with them. This

mental and spiritual recognition of Christ is of great importance. Dr. Kennedy quotes Lord Chief Justice Cockburn in the summing up of a celebrated trial as follows: "I now pass from the question of identity of person to a question which is of quite equal or of greater importance, and that is, how far there is not outward identity or resemblance but inward identity of mind."[2]

193. It is clear that none of the disciples expected Christ to rise from the dead. The women were anxious as to how the stone could be removed from the door of the sepulchre that they might enter. John says: "As yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead" (John xx. 9). On the Emmaus journey Jesus rebukes the disciples for being "slow of heart to believe" (Luke xxiv. 25). These disciples were sad and despondent over the disappointment of all their hopes.

194. We pass to the testimony of the Apostle Paul. His conversion took place when the risen Christ appeared to him on the way to Damascus. This is his own account of the matter. It is the only possible explanation of the career of this man, his sudden complete change in character and mission. He is suddenly transformed from being a man who is seeking "to suppress the Gospel in every creature into a man who seeks to preach the Gospel to every creature." The enemy and persecutor becomes the champion of the faith. No vestige of evidence exists in support of any other theory of his conversion, such



as a gradual change in Paul's mind due to natural causes.

Paul preached the Gospel of the resurrection throughout Asia Minor, in Greece and in Rome. In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians he argues not to prove that Christ arose merely, but to show the bearing of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body on the Christian hope. He sets forth the facts as to Christ: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all as unto one born out of due time he appeared to me also" (1 Cor. xv. 3-8).

195. Let it be borne in mind that this epistle is undisputed. It was written not more than twenty-five years after the death of Christ. The appeal is to more than two hundred and fifty living witnesses to the resurrection of Christ. Consider the folly of such an appeal had there been no such witnesses, or had they borne a contrary testimony. The apostle enumerates five appearances of Christ. Individuals are named from whom he had the opportunity to obtain the information. He himself saw the risen Christ, not in a trance or by means of a vision, but

actually. What he saw made him a witness of the resurrection and an apostle just as Peter and Paul and the others were qualified to be apostles. Moreover, Paul founds his Gospel on the resurrection. Without it all was vain. The cross which he preached was meaningless.

196. Here, then, is the chain of proof from the testimony of Paul: An eye-witness speaks of what he saw; his witness comes through an authentic document from his own hand; the testimony relates to an event which occurred within twenty-five years of the writing of the document; the testimony of the writer appeals for corroboration to two hundred and fifty living witnesses. Surely all the tests of credibility may be successfully applied to this testimony. Moreover, whatever may be true as to date and authorship of the four Gospels we have in Paul's four acknowledged epistles ample and irrefutable proof of the resurrection of Christ.

197. Consider next the manifold way in which the apostolic witness to the resurrection of Jesus is confirmed. It is confirmed in a remarkable manner by the sudden and complete moral transformation of those who witnessed it. We have already noted the case of the apostle Paul. So it was with the others. In Jerusalem, in the very mouth of the lion, the frightened and fleeing disciples who had denied their Lord gather again and with dauntless courage proclaim this most offensive doctrine, and thousands are converted. These men are careless now of danger

and of death. Most of them yield themselves to stripes, imprisonment, and finally death for the truth of their witness. Fraud does not engender such moral and physical courage. Delusion does not create moral kingdoms of heavenly beauty and power. Psychic changes, mere mental impressions, springing up within and spending themselves after their kind, do not rear new fabrics containing material wholly absent from the minds in which they occur. The tree brings forth fruit after its kind and no other. Here was fruit which was not after the human kind. The resurrection was the efficient cause, and it alone was equal to the result.

The doctrine of the Person of Christ turned upon the fact of the resurrection. He was "marked out" to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead, was Paul's way of stating it (Romans i. 4). His atoning work had no value without the resurrection. "He was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification" (Romans iv. 25). The hope of Christ's second coming in glory, in the view of New Testament Christians, grew out of the resurrection and its attendant events and teachings. Moreover, the resurrection of our own bodies is expected as a result of that of Christ, who was the "first fruits of them that slept."

It is to be noted also that only a physical resurrection can answer to the total New Testament account of what occurred in Joseph's tomb. A mere survival of the spirit of Christ is foreign to and in-

consistent with every item in the record. Exegesis and literary criticism stultify themselves by so violent a construction of the resurrection stories.

There were disputes and controversies among the Christians of apostolic times, but no difference of opinion existed on this point. The Judaizers troubled Paul, but they did not question the fact of Christ's resurrection. "Even the heretics who said there was no resurrection of the dead (i. e., Christians) could be argued with on the ground of their belief in Christ's resurrection."

The first day of the week took the place of the Jewish Sabbath as the day of rest and worship as a result of the resurrection of Jesus on the first day of the week. Every week, then, through the Christian era the memorial day has borne witness to Christ's resurrection. The Christian church also is an institution which rests upon the resurrection as its foundation. These two witnesses bear their testimony to-day and cannot be explained away.

198. It remains to consider briefly the attempts to account for the New Testament records of the resurrection of Jesus without belief in the fact of the resurrection. Formerly the resurrection stories were ascribed to fraud. The disciples stole the body away and asserted that he rose, or other form of fraud was practiced. This theory is abandoned to-day. Its absurdity was enough to condemn it at the outset. What possible interest could men have had in preaching and dying for a mere dead and

impotent Christ? The theory of fraud recoiled upon its advocates. Christianity as a moral phenomenon could not, as Dr. Robertson Nicoll says, be "built on rottenness." Men felt this. Even unbelievers could not but admit it.

199. The alleged resurrection, others assert, was due to a swoon. Jesus did not die. He was reanimated, after lying in the grave for three days, from only an apparent death. Even Professor Huxley among moderns has hinted at this as a possible explanation. This theory of course denies that even the spear-thrust of the Roman soldier ended the life of Jesus, and assumes that the enfeebled body of the resuscitated Christ was equal to rolling away the stone which was a protection from men without, and that somehow Jesus eluded the Roman guards who were placed to watch the tomb. Strauss, who rejected the resurrection of Christ, gives the conclusive answer to the swoon theory: "It is impossible that a being who had stolen half dead out of the sepulchre, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening and indulgence, and who still at last yielded to his sufferings, could have given to his disciples the impression that he was a conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life—an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made upon them in life and in death; at the most could only have given it an elegiac

voice, but could by no possibility have changed their sorrow into enthusiasm, have elevated their reverence into worship."

200. Another theory, advocated by Keim, denies that Christ's body was raised, but holds that in some way the living spiritual Jesus did communicate with the disciples after his death. This recognizes the miraculous, but satisfies neither naturalist nor supernaturalist. It is utterly inconsistent with many passages, such as "Handle me and see," etc. If Jesus' body lay in the grave, then he was subject to sin and death as other men. The theory empties the doctrinal teaching, based on the resurrection, by early disciples, of all meaning. The theory also fails utterly to account for the empty grave of Jesus.

201. But we pass to consider the most generally accepted modern theory advocated by unbelievers. It is known as the hallucination or vision theory. Strauss, Renan and others have held it in one form or another. Jesus died, it says, but did not rise. His body remained in the grave. Nor did he communicate with disciples. They were in a highly excited and excitable nervous state. Mary Magdalene, at the tomb, much overwrought, imagined she saw Jesus, and told her story to other overwrought disciples. They heard a window rattle or the wind whistle and imagined Christ spoke to them. Others heard and believed likewise. Renan thinks that Peter dreamed the scene at the lakeside and the interview with the risen Jesus. Thus arose the conviction

of the resurrection. Thus the foundation of Christianity was laid. For all candid and discriminating critics admit that the *conviction* of the resurrection was the heart of the early preaching.

202. The replies to this theory are manifold and conclusive. The mental state of the disciples precluded hallucination. Men who see ghosts are usually looking for them. A state of expectancy precedes the vision. But the disciples were in despair. Every hope was blasted by the death of Jesus, as the two on the way to Emmaus alleged. Besides no past experience prepared for this hallucination. Physiological psychology insists that every hallucination is the product of previous brain-states due to abnormal stimulus from within or without. But there were no brain-states produced by previous experience to furnish the contents of this extraordinary hallucination. Resurrection appearances were not a staple of Jewish history. The brain-states which were freshest with these men were the result of fear of Jewish and Roman rulers, coupled with loss of hope concerning Jesus. Jerusalem was the last place in which the morbid imagination of a woman could convert a large group of cowardly men into moral heroes. Jerusalem just then was not a good vision climate.

203. Moreover, there were five hundred others who came under the power of this hallucination, scattered abroad even in far Galilee. None doubts. All succumb and go forth and turn the world upside down. Men who were mockers and doubters at first

afterwards yield to the hallucination. There were surely no overwrought nerves or previous brain-states with these to induce them to give credence to so remarkable a tale. Moreover, the effects of this hallucination, its power to transform men, survive. The test of time has but strengthened its hold on men.

204. Then, too, these victims of hallucination, these men of overwrought nerves, were under a strange restraint. Ten times the vision comes, then suddenly it ceases. Why? Hallucinations should have become chronic after five hundred had been brought under their sway. But now hallucination gives place to a definite and conquering program of evangelization. Not vision now, not dreams now, but witnessing and work. Truly these were marvelous fanatics!

205. But whence the teachings of the risen Christ? Hallucination is usually wanting in this element. Here were words, thoughts, commands, which these evangelists adopt and upon them base all their future action. And what of the dead body of Jesus all this time? It was the interest of friend and foe alike to produce it. Disciples would wish to do so to verify or disprove their hallucination. Enemies would surely have done so for obvious reasons. The empty grave of Jesus baffles every theory of resurrection save the true one. Strauss reconstructs the story and allows time for the growth and theory of the visions. But it is clear from the account that four or five of the appearances of

the risen Christ occurred on the day of the resurrection, the third day after the burial.

206. The law of cause and effect is violated also by the vision theory. It furnishes no explanation of Christianity. Spiritualism with its visions produces no such moral fruits. Men who write histories of Christianity often evade the problem of the cause at this point. Strauss and Harnack both recognize that the *doctrine* of the resurrection is the vital breath of early preaching and the cause of Christianity, but, as historians, waive the question of fact. Well they may if denial is proposed. It is only as philosophers that they deny or leave doubtful the fact.

207. In the realm of testimony, then, by all scientific methods of dealing with questions of history, the resurrection of Christ stands. Regarding the assertion that miracle is impossible Dr. Alexander Maclaren well says: "One would like to know how it comes that our modern men of science, who protest so much against science being corrupted by metaphysics, should commit themselves to an assertion like that. Surely that is stark, staring metaphysics. It seems as if they thought that the metaphysics which said that there was anything behind the physical universe was unscientific; but that the metaphysics which said that there was nothing behind physics was quite legitimate, and ought to be allowed to pass muster. What have the votaries of pure physical science, who hold the barren word-contests

of theology in such contempt to do out-Heroding Herod in that fashion, and venturing on metaphysical assertions of such a sort?"[3]

Christianity stands or falls with the resurrection of Jesus. The issue may as well be squarely faced. Other miracles of Christ are easy to accept if this one took place. Our hope is built on it. "For if he be not risen there is no resurrection; and if he be not risen there is no forgiveness; and if he be not risen there is no Son of God; and the world is desolate, and the heaven is empty, and the grave is dark, and sin abides and death is eternal. If Christ be dead, then that awful vision is true, 'As I looked up into the immeasurable heavens for the Divine eye, it froze me with an empty bottomless eye-socket.'" But "we take up the ancient glad salutation 'The Lord is risen,' and turning from these thoughts of disaster and despair that that awful supposition drags after it, fall back upon the sober certainty, and with the apostle break forth in triumph, 'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.'"[4]

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE FOUR GOSPELS: THE LITERARY SOURCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

We have purposely deferred the consideration of the evidence for the authenticity of the Gospel records. The aim has been to show the strength of our position independently of nice questions of historical criticism. The evidence on the face of the Gospels themselves and that based on the undisputed epistles of Paul have been set forth in previous chapters. We now take up the historical evidence for our four Gospels. The Gospel of John presents peculiar problems of its own and might well be treated separately. But our space can be utilized better in other ways, especially as the evidence for the four-fold evangelic record can be marshaled in a satisfactory manner in a single general view.

208. Matthew and John were apostles; Mark and Luke were companions of apostles. Thus all the Gospels were apostolic in origin. Matthew, Mark and Luke were written before the end of the first Christian century; John near the close of the century, but still within its limits, and last of the four. These are the Gospels, these the writers, and these the dates, as we maintain.

The first task will be to present as concisely as may be the historical evidence. Then we shall consider this evidence from a variety of points of view. The face value of the evidence is very great; it is, indeed, convincing in itself. But the evidence is fruitful in other ways. It supplies material for the construction of a very strong confirmatory argument.

209. The usual starting point in dealing with this subject, the close of the second century of our era, is as convenient as any. Between A. D. 180 and 200 what do we find? We find that throughout the Christian world in a circle of churches surrounding the Mediterranean our four Gospels were received without question and ascribed to the authors named above. No other alleged records of the life of Jesus Christ were accepted as authentic by the churches at large at this time.

210. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, from A. D. 178 to 202, in his work against heresies says: "Matthew published his Gospel writing among the Hebrews in their own language." A little further on he says: "Mark, the disciple and secretary of Peter, having committed to writing the things proclaimed by Peter, transmitted them to us. Then Luke, the companion of Paul, recorded in a work the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who had leaned his head on his breast, himself also published the Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia."[1] Irenæus assures us that no other gospels were recognized by the churches and that

these four Gospels were. There is no intimation that any one disputed them.

211. According to Clement of Alexandria, who wrote about the end of the second century, Matthew and Luke were written first; Mark, a companion of Peter, deriving his knowledge from Peter, wrote at the request of hearers of the latter; and John "having ascertained that the bodily things had been published in the Gospels, urged by the notables and impelled by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel."[2] Clement says he derived his information from the oldest presbyters.[3] He refers to a statement in an apocryphal gospel as not found in "the four Gospels which have been handed down to us."[4]

212. The writing known as the *Muratorian Fragment* was written about 170 A. D. Part of the writing is gone. Its opening reference is to Mark. It says Luke's Gospel stands third in order, having been written by Luke, the physician, the companion of Paul. The fourth place is given to the Gospel of John and the occasion of its composition is set forth at some length. The author of this fragment says the contents of all the Gospels were declared by one Sovereign Spirit, and there is no hint of doubt or dispute as to their acceptance.[5]

Tertullian, a bishop of North Africa about 200 A. D., in his work against Marcion contends with vehemence for our four Gospels, mentioning them all by name. He contrasts them with later forgeries and refers them to the authority of the

churches which uphold the tradition of the Apostles.[6]

213. One of the earliest Bibles was that of Syria, the Peshito, dating back to about 170 A. D., and it contains all four of our Gospels.

Thus it appears that at the close of the second century in Gaul on the West, in North Africa, and in Syria, our four Gospels were universally accepted. They were the sole authoritative Gospels for the entire Christian world. Dr. Westcott remarks that "all the Fathers at the close of the second century agree in appealing to the testimony of antiquity" for our New Testament books. "And the appeal was made at a time when it was easy to try its worth. The links which connected them with the apostolic age were few and known: and if they had not been continuous it would have been easy to expose the break. But their appeal was never gainsaid; and it still remains as a sure proof that no chasm separates the old and the new in the history of Christianity."[7]

214. Hitherto we have considered the evidence for our four Gospels at the end of the second century. Can we find secure footing as we move backward towards the apostolic times? The evidence for this earlier period is ample to convince the unbiased student. Tatian is a writer who comes a little earlier than Tertullian, Irenæus and Clement, between 155 A. D. and 170. In his *Address to the Greeks* Tatian shows his dependence on the Gospel of John for cer-

tain passages. He also prepared a harmony of the Gospels called *Diatessaron*. This harmony contains all of our four Gospels. It was known only through other writers until the latter part of the last century. Critics denied that it was such a harmony. But the discovery of Ephraem's commentary upon it and the *Diatessaron* itself put a quietus upon critical denials.[8]

Tatian was a hearer of one who comes still earlier. Justin Martyr wrote two apologies and a dialogue with Trypho, a Jew. The date of these works is not far from the middle of the second century, probably before that time. A tolerably complete account of the life of Christ can be constructed from Justin's quotations or citations from early records. He calls these records "Memoirs" of the Apostles. They were also called Gospels.[9] These memoirs were generally received by Christians, were read in the assemblies, they had apostolic authority, and were composed by apostles or their followers. The most reasonable view is that in quoting from the "Memoirs" Justin is making use of our four Gospels. His quotations are not always verbally accurate. But this was true of his quotations from the Septuagint, and does not necessarily imply his use of other sources. But even conceding that he employed a score or more of other records besides our four, the striking fact appears that practically all his citations conform to statements in our Gospels. The half dozen or so of his references to the life of Christ not found in our

Gospels are not ascribed by him to the "Memoirs," but to other sources. This demonstrates conclusively that if our four Gospels were not Justin's "Memoirs" then they contain the substance of those memoirs so far as Justin's writings exhibit that substance. It was unnecessary for Justin to refer to the authors of the Gospels by name as he was writing for unbelievers. They did not recognize apostolic authority. Moreover, the canon had not yet been formed and the seal of authority affixed to the collection of sacred writings. When we recall now that Tatian, the disciple of Justin, when he wrote his harmony, the *Diatessaron,* included our four Gospels, the conclusion seems forced upon us that Justin's memoirs were our Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. A few references only, it is true, are taken from John, yet there are sufficient to indicate clearly a connection with Johannine facts and ideas. For example, his references to regeneration, to Christ as the Word, and to Him as taking flesh and becoming man, and as God coming forth from above, show his close conformity to the teachings of John.[10].

215. Behind Justin Martyr stands Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in Asia Minor, whose testimony links us with apostolic men and women. Papias was born about 65 A. D. He published an *Exposition of the Oracles of Our Lord* about 135 A. D. Papias was acquainted with companions and friends of seven apostles and two disciples of the Lord. He says he learned that Mark's Gospel was the report of Peter,

and that Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Aristion and the "Presbyter John" were the surviving disciples of the Lord whom Papias knew. The "elder" informed him about Mark's Gospel. There is no mention of Luke and John in the fragments of the writings of Papias which have been preserved. These fragments we have preserved in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius, who wrote about 300 A. D. Papias may have referred to Luke and John in the original work. It was not required by the aim and plan of Eusebius to tell all he found in Papias, or other sources from which he drew. Eusebius explains that he meant to narrate not all but only the most interesting and significant facts regarding the Gospels.[11] Eusebius himself accepted all four of the Gospels. Indirectly then his neglect to mention Luke and John in connection with Papias implies that Papias does mention these Gospels. For had he been silent about them this would have been an interesting and significant fact itself, like those given about Matthew and Luke.

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was born A. D. 70, and suffered martyrdom about 155 A. D. He wrote an epistle to the Philippians and quotes from Matthew, Mark and Luke, though not from the Gospel of John. Did Polycarp accept John's Gospel, or did that Gospel exist in Polycarp's day? Certain facts seem conclusive on this point. For one thing Polycarp was thirty years old when the Apostle John died and had known him well. Irenæus in a letter to Florinus speaks of his intercourse with Polycarp

when a "youth." He remembers "the place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in . . . and how he would describe his intercourse with John, and with the rest who had seen the Lord." Irenæus goes on to say that Polycarp related what he thus heard as to the miracles and teachings of the Lord "as having received them from eye-witnesses of the life of the Word," and further that he (Irenæus) noted them down in his heart and ruminated upon them faithfully.[12]

Thus it appears that Polycarp is the link connecting Irenæus with the apostolic era. Irenæus at the end of the second century accepts John's Gospel along with the others as undisputed. From Polycarp, a personal follower of John, he had learned in his youth. Could it have been on other authority than that of Polycarp that Irenæus accepted the fourth Gospel? There seems to be no reasonable ground for an affirmative answer to this question.

216. Let us briefly glance over the ground we have covered. At the end of the second century we find on the evidence of Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian that our four Gospels were universally accepted and that no others were. This fact clearly implies that the Gospels had been in existence a considerable time. Otherwise they could not have gained such general acceptance in the four quarters of the civilized world. Behind this group of witnesses we find an earlier witness, about 160 A. D., in Tatian

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and his harmony of the four Gospels, called the *Diatessaron*. Behind Tatian again stands his teacher and friend, Justin Martyr, prior to 150 A. D., with his numerous references to the "Memoirs," in substantial agreement with our Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. As a buttress to the testimony of Justin on the other side, and connecting us with the apostles themselves, stand Polycarp and Papias and their writings, with clear references to Matthew, Mark and Luke, while Polycarp and Irenæus join hands to confirm the generally accepted view that John the Apostle wrote the fourth Gospel. We have seen in a previous chapter the agreement of the accepted epistles of Paul with the Gospels, in their various representations as to the facts of the life of Christ. This chain of evidence seems to establish beyond reasonable doubt the view that our Gospels are of apostolic origin.

217. We turn next to a new form of the argument. In the end the question of authenticity of the four Gospels turns upon historical evidence. But such evidence as we possess speaks a manifold message which is by no means exhausted when we have set it forth without comment. We propose now to see if the facts as presented can be exhibited in any new and convincing light. Our starting point shall be two facts clearly established. The first is that the sole ground of acceptance of the testimony of the Gospels by the churches everywhere at the end of the second century was their *apostolicity*. The

churches believed that these writings owed their origin to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Whether they were correct in this belief or not, the fact of the belief is clear. The second fact from which we start is that in the age immediately succeeding Christ the one final test of the authoritativeness of any Christian teaching was apostolicity. This appears in the Book of Acts and the accepted epistles of Paul, to say nothing of the Gospels themselves, and I think will not be disputed by any. The apostles were the authorized founders of Christianity. It is true that in the early portion of the apostolic age the testimony was oral and not written; and that at the end of the second century the testimony was written and not oral. But the point of importance for us is that in the initial and terminal stages of this period apostolicity was the standard by which oral or written testimony was finally tested.

218. The question to be considered is, How did this principle work during the hundred years from the time of the death of the apostles towards the end of the first century and the time of the universal acceptance of the four Gospels as apostolic near the end of the second? The natural supposition is that the apostles would not fail to leave a written gospel bearing the stamp of their authority, as they realized the future need of the churches, and particularly as the churches called for such writings. This natural supposition is confirmed by what we have seen as to the origin of the four gospels. These apostolic

writings would at once take the place of the apostles themselves as sources for the Christian facts and teachings. They would naturally be guarded with jealous care. If at a later time any writing appeared claiming to be apostolic it would at once be challenged and its claims investigated. There is, then, no place between the apostolic era and the end of the second century when the Gospels could have sprung into being and have established their claim to be apostolic.

219. The above, I say, is the natural, not to say necessary, supposition. But there is an abundance of historical facts which corroborate it. One fact of very great importance is quietly ignored by those who deny the apostolic origin of the Gospels. The fact is this: There was a discriminating and selective process which governed the churches in the first and second centuries of a very rigid character. The easy assumption that our Gospels are the result of the gradual growth of myths about Jesus forgets that a most resolute purpose on the part of the churches runs through these centuries against the acceptance of mythical gospels. There were mythical writings in abundance, it is true. There was the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* with a decidedly legal tendency; the *Gospel according to the Egyptians* with an ascetic tendency; the *Protevangelium of James,* giving an account of Mary, to show her perpetual virginity. There was also the *Gospel of the Infancy,* attributed to the apostle Thomas, full of

grotesque and imaginary miracles. There were, indeed, more than two score of these writings, or fragments, of one kind or another. Yet none of them ever gained general acceptance among the churches. Why was this? Doubtless because the opportunities for detecting and exposing forgeries were so great that none of them succeeded in gaining a secure footing.[13]

Indeed, some of these non-apostolic writings which contained sound teaching were in use for a time in some of the churches. The *Shepherd of Hermas* was one of these. But when the issue arose as to its apostolic origin it was rejected. A strong reaction appears about the time of Justin Martyr against even this kind of use of these non-apostolic writings. Christians began to feel that these unauthorized productions were about to imperil the standing of the true records and hence the principle of apostolicity was applied more rigidly than ever.[14]

220. Another fact of interest is that this mass of literature, claiming authority as apostolic, yet unable to establish it, was quite secondary to our Gospels in contents. They were written to fill in the breaks in the Gospels, or were fanciful stories of the infancy of Jesus, or for other like purposes. They depend on our Gospels for their interest and without them were merely "detached leaves," as Godet expresses it. Now the rejection of these writings shows clearly that a careful selective principle controlled in dealing with writings about Christ during this period. The

canon of the New Testament was not formed blindly. The early churches were on their guard against imposture.

There is still further illustration of this selective principle in the formation of the authorized collection. Luke informs us in his preface that many had taken in hand to narrate the things concerning Christ. Doubtless numerous disciples of Christ besides the apostles felt warranted in undertaking this task. What became of all these early gospels? How comes it that four only survive? If the principle of apostolicity controlled, the explanation is simple. And in this case it must have controlled from the beginning. Four were clearly recognized as coming from apostles or apostolic men, and as bearing, so to speak, the apostolic seal. The others were of secondary worth. They were slowly dropped out as unnecessary.

221. The activity of the selective process finds confirmation in another way. There is to-day what is called the "synoptic problem" among critical students of the New Testament. The problem is to show the relations existing between Matthew, Mark and Luke. Various theories have been advanced to account for the likenesses and unlikenesses found in these three Gospels. Some say Mark is the oldest and that the other two depend on this Gospel. The theories cannot be even suggested here. But the existence of a "synoptic problem" to-day based on the close inner relations of these Gospels is itself a mark

of the unity of the Gospels. Common causes were at work producing a result at the same time one and various. The unity in variety of the first three Gospels as modern critics see them is but a new form of the early note of unity and common origin discerned in these writings by the Christian churches.[15]

There is another way to illustrate the selective process which controlled the Christians of the second century in determining which writings should be accepted. Opponents of Christianity and heretical sects bore no small part in the life of that period. Celsus, one of the most able of the earlier foes of Christianity, made use of our four Gospels. He wrote in the second century. His works perished, but Origen quotes from him copiously. Celsus used all four canonical Gospels as the basis of his attacks, and only these. Why? Evidently because from no others could he have drawn the generally accepted Christian facts and doctrines. The sharp eye of the intelligent enemy may be trusted to find the real point of attack.[16]

Marcion, a heretic about 140 A. D., mutilated the Gospel of Luke and along with it accepted Paul's epistles because he thought he could thus best support his heresy. Thus Marcion also testifies to the accepted writings from the side of the heretics. If there had been other accepted writings which he could have employed to better advantage he would have done so. In like manner the Ebionites used the Gospel of Matthew, and the Docetæ the Gospel

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of Mark, and the Gnostics the Gospel of John. These parties built on bad exegesis of generally accepted writings. In the case of the Gnostics a very sharp controversy was carried on with the Christians. If there had been doubt as to John's Gospel, the use of it by the Gnostic heretics would have led to its rejection by the churches.[17]

222. Thus it appears that our Gospels were received by practically all parties. The Alogi, a small and shadowy sect, objected to some things taught by John and rejected his Gospel. But this single note of opposition but accentuates the general unanimity. The fact is that virtually all the positive evidence is in favor of and not against the authenticity of the fourth Gospel. That it was quoted less than the synoptics in the early controversial writings of Christians was probably due to the fact that the synoptics are less doctrinal and deal more with the facts of Christ's life. As to Matthew, especially, there is a mark of antiquity in its use in some form by the Judaizers. This party dates back to Paul's time, as is well known. Yet in the second century they adhere to a form of Matthew. There is no way to explain how this came about, save on the supposition of the antiquity of Matthew.[18]

223. Let us recall now that two of our Gospels bear internal witness to their authorship. Luke in his preface tells how his account was written, and in the 27th verse of the last chapter of John it appears that disciples attest the authorship. Call to mind

also that jealousies and disputes early arose among the churches. Questions of primacy, and of doctrine and practice, began to assert themselves. The east and the west did not agree on a question about Easter. Yet amid all their differences there was complete unanimity in their acceptance of our four Gospels. This was not an agreement enforced by any ecclesiastical authority, for such central authority did not then exist. The intercourse between the parts of Christendom through missionary activity was constant. All claims, true and false, would be subjected to the most rigid scrutiny. Thus arose the unanimity which was so marked and invariable.

We have seen that apostolicity was the criterion at the beginning, when Christianity began its career after the crucifixion. Apostolicity was the criterion at the end of the second century, concerning which all parties are now agreed. We have also shown in a manifold way that between this initial and the terminal stage of the early Christian epoch apostolicity was the criterion, and that Christian believers were on their guard against spurious Gospels and epistles. A selective and critical process guided, not indeed in the modern scientific sense, but in a very real sense; a process to be trusted because of the interests at stake, the number and competency of the witnesses, and the many historical evidences which attest it in the writings still extant.

224. The burden of proof is upon those who deny the authenticity of our four Gospels to show

how they arose and became current under the circumstances we have outlined, after the apostolic age. This has never been done without violence to much of the evidence. It is usual for them to seek to undermine the credibility of the witnesses. Irenæus especially has been attacked. So have many of the others. But when due allowance is made for all the considerations which have been urged, the evidence is quite conclusive. The reader is referred to the bibliography of this chapter in the back of the volume for references to works which discuss the objections to the testimony of our witnesses. There is not space here to deal with them adequately.

Of course, if we had all the literature of the period which has perished we would doubtless discover evidence more complete and satisfactory on some points. But even here we have in a sense a document which serves us instead of this literature. Eusebius, who wrote his Ecclesiastical History about the end of the third century, had these writings before him, and based his conclusions upon what he discovered in them. He accepts our four Gospels, and these alone. Evidently if this literature had contained evidence against any of our Gospels, Eusebius would have found it. The chief objections to John's Gospel to-day are due not to lack of external attestation by historical evidence but to internal peculiarities, which we confidently believe are more than offset by other internal peculiarities plus a very considerable amount of external evidence.

225. In conclusion, we must not forget the power of cumulative evidence. Practically all the testimony points one way. It may now and then be open to objection, but when we consider its abundance, its uniformity, its variety, and its range over the entire Christian world of the first and second centuries, there is no room left for reasonable doubt. The choice, then, is between no evidence at all and such evidence as we have set forth. Straws even show the direction of the current. The movement of one straw over a short distance might be due to an eddy, but when there are many historical straws moving in one direction over a two hundred year period there can be no mistaking which way the stream is flowing.

CHAPTER XV.

CHRIST AND EVOLUTION: HIS PLACE IN THE WORLD ORDER.

Having completed our view of Jesus Christ as he appears before us as a historic figure and having looked finally at the documents containing the records of his manifestation to the world, it is proper that we close this division of our subject by considering Christ's relations to the order of the world in the larger sense. This we may accomplish by seeking an answer to the following questions: Is Christ the product of evolution? If not, what relation does he sustain to the general order of nature and to human history as a whole? The first of these questions can be reduced to this: Is Christ an effect or is he a cause? Evolution, according to Professor Le Conte, proceeds in its upward course by means of "resident forces," that is to say, forces residing in the order which undergoes development, and not by means of forces introduced from without. Was Christ produced thus, or did his coming involve a departure from the method?

226. The answer to all these questions will be found by considering three statements, as follows: (1) Christ is the crown but not the product of nature.

(2) Christ met conditions created by human experience, but was not evolved out of that experience. (3) Christ was thus the fulfillment of supernatural purpose, fitting harmoniously into world conditions.

227. First, then, Christ is the crown but not the product of nature. The question has often been discussed by theologians whether the incarnation of Christ would have been necessary had man not sinned. Apart from sin would there have existed other needs in man's moral progress to be met only by an incarnation of the Son of God? Some assert that in any case the incarnation would have occurred. Others that as Christ's mission was redemption a redemptive need alone could have occasioned an incarnation. The question is speculative and need not detain us. Dr. James Orr is probably right in saying that the unity of the divine plan requires us to suppose that both sin through human freedom and incarnation were originally provided for in the mind of God. Having foreseen the one he provided for it by means of the other. It does not detract from, but rather adds to its value as a movement for the rescue of man from sin, that the incarnation was also deeply imbedded in the divine plan of the universe; Christ certainly sustains profound relations to physical nature. "All things have been created through him and unto him, and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. i. 16, 17).

We pass by this theological question, however, to

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observe that Christ as he is portrayed in the New Testament fitly crowns the whole course of nature when nature is viewed as a revelation of God, and as the sphere of his action. Nature progressively reveals God. Power, wisdom, skill, in a thousand forms, are made known through his handiwork in inorganic nature. In the next stage life, through its many phases, unfolds higher elements in the divine nature, and at length reason, conscience, will and personality in man still higher conceptions of what God is. Says a recent writer: "Something of God is manifest in the mechanical laws of inorganic structures; something more in the growth and flexibility of vital forms of plant and animal; something more still in the reason, conscience, love, personality of man. Now from the Christian point of view, the revelation of God, the unfolding of divine qualities, reaches a climax in Christ. God has expressed in inorganic nature his immutability, immensity, power, wisdom: in organic nature he has shown also that he is alive; in human nature he has given glimpses of his mind and character. In Christ not one of these earlier revelations is abrogated: nay, they are reaffirmed: but they reach a completion in the fuller exposition of the divine character, the divine personality, the divine love."[2] In short, unless Christ had appeared in due order the prophecies of revelation, so to speak, contained on the lower planes of nature would have been left unfulfilled. At each stage in the upward progress something new is added

to the self-disclosure God is making of himself. In man, the goal of the natural order, that revelation is incomplete. In Christ it is carried to its utmost limit.

228. Now it will be seen at a glance that this interpretation of nature is based on theism. Indeed, it is based upon a theism which thinks of God as actively engaged revealing himself to intelligent creatures. It does not, however, assert that Christ is entirely the product of forces "resident" in the natural order. It rather implies the contrary. On one side, indeed, Christ is bound to the natural order. His birth from a human mother, his beautiful and beneficent human life, subject to earthly conditions, clearly exhibit this. There remains, however, the irreducible divine element which requires another explanation.

So far, then, as Christ fits the order of nature as its crown and consummation, we are led thereby to look up to a Being outside that order, who acts upon it from without, for any adequate explanation of the character and mission of Christ. The facts we are considering would have no meaning for evolution carried on by blind impersonal force.

If the modern scientific theory of development leaves us confronting the natural man as the goal and explanation of the preceding process, Christianity in its turn brings us face to face with Christ, the supernatural Son of God, as the higher key to the history of nature and of man. Thus God perfects what he

began when he laid the foundations of the universe, first by producing a Being in his own image, and capable in the completest way of fellowship with himself, and second by sending one from above to restore the fellowship when broken by sin.

229. The first and third Gospels assert that Jesus Christ had no human father. Nothing elsewhere in the New Testament in the slightest degree indicates the contrary; much, indeed, especially the writings of Paul and John, indirectly confirms the account of the Virgin birth. No conclusive evidence against it has been deduced from any source. We do not propose, however, to enter upon this question. The writer is confident that the virgin birth will remain if the other supernatural aspects of Christ's Person are sustained. It is implicit in all the rest, especially in his sinless life and in the resurrection and ascension. Our past chapters have, it is hoped, established the supernatural character of Christ's Person and mission. We do not fear for the fate of the doctrine of the miraculous birth of Jesus so long as the other contentions securely stand. It is proposed, however, to show that Jesus was not the result of natural evolution from another point of view, viz: that he could not have been the product of forces existing at the time of his advent. This leads us to the second proposition.

230. That proposition is: Christ met conditions created by human experience but was not evolved out of the experience. The moral condition of mankind

in the world at large, when Christ came, was most deplorable. By a partial view, of course, any period may be shown to be corrupt. But the testimonies of competent witnesses on this point leave no room for doubt. The pages of Livy, of Juvenal, and even of Seneca, the moralist, and others, bear out the statement as to the general condition of morals in Rome and the Empire. Mommsen and Gibbon reproduce their pictures in vivid colors. Seneca says: "So public has iniquity become, so mightily does it flame up in all hearts, that innocence is no longer rare: it has ceased to exist."[3] The palace of the emperors might have been with equal propriety likened to a nest of unclean birds or a den of ferocious beasts. Parricide, matricide, fratricide, every form of cruelty and revenge, held high carnival in a mire of voluptuousness and lust. The ancient religions were in disrepute, and their priests laughed in each other's faces as they ministered about the heathen altars.

231. Moral *teaching* was not wanting among some philosophers, but it was a vain thing for the regeneration of such an age. Aristotle, with his usual wisdom and penetration, had already discerned the weakness of morals alone. Speaking of books and treatises on ethics he pronounces them incapable of making men good, and says "the truth is that they seem to have power to urge on and to excite young men of liberal minds, and to make a character that is generous and truly fond of the honorable, easily

influenced by virtue; but that they have no power to persuade the multitude to what is virtuous and honorable."[4]

On the side of thought and speculation a corresponding paralysis had fallen upon men. It is unnecessary to point out the universal skepticism in which Greek philosophy had grown pale and feeble with age. The men of more profound thought had in the glorious days of that philosophy reached out to the boundaries of human speculation, and, with an intellectual humility which was as sane as it was beautiful, had acknowledged it. The well known words of Plato sound like a prophecy of Christ, and mark the meeting place of man's upward strivings after God and God's downward reachings after men: "We will wait for One, be it a God or a God-inspired man," said Plato, "to teach us our religious duties and . . . to take away the darkness from our eyes."[5] Again, "We must lay hold of the best human opinion in order that borne by it as on a raft we may sail over the dangerous sea of life, unless we can find a stronger boat, or some word of God, which will more surely and safely carry us."[6]

"What is truth?" was the cynical and despairing question of Pilate to him who declared himself to be the Truth.

232. As to the future life neither philosophers nor moralists had any sure word for men. Suicide was regarded by the best of them, in the later periods of philosophy, as the fitting method of terminating

an unhappy existence. Says Uhlhorn: "Happiness was no longer the goal of philosophy. Man despaired of attaining it. . . . Here, too, heathenism ended in barrenness and despair. . . . *Patet exitus.* The way out of this life stands open. That is the last consolation of expiring heathenism. "Seest thou," exclaims Seneca, "yon steep height? Thence is the descent to freedom. Seest thou yon sea, yon river, yon well? Freedom sits there in the depths. Seest thou yon low, withered tree? There freedom hangs. Seest thou thy neck, thy throat, thy heart? They are ways of escape from bondage."[7] Surely the words of Seneca are a pathetic revelation of the vanity and futility of his ethical precepts as a means of arming the soul for its life conflict. Surely in this soil we find no germs of the Christ.

233. Let us ask next: Does Judaism furnish a soil out of which Christ and Christianity might have been evolved on natural lines? Here was the highest morality the world had known in its Old Testament literary form. In the life of the people, however, it had degenerated into an empty formalism. The Essenes, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees were the three leading and representative groups in Jewish life. The Essenes were an ascetic and mystic order or brotherhood, living a secluded life. Jesus had no contact with them, so far as is known, and his teachings directly opposed theirs. The Sadducees were the cultivated skeptics of the day, denying the resurrection and spiritual life beyond the grave. The

Pharisees were the great popular party. They were narrow bigots and formalists of the most pronounced type, and received at the hands of Jesus most scathing denunciation. There was a small remnant of pious Jews scattered about in Israel who bore some of the marks of genuine spirituality. But these even were shocked and offended beyond measure at Christ's messianic programme. By no combination of elements in Judaism could Christ's teachings have sprung up, to say nothing of his character.

Nor was there anything in current Jewish literature which could have produced Christ's ideals. The Messianic elements in that literature are temporal, carnal, narrow and Jewish. Nor were there ethical ideals which he might have gathered up into a system such as he has left us. His ethical precepts were startlingly new and original. They were the reversal, not the development, of the morality of the day. "The first shall be last and the last first." "He that findeth his life loseth it, and he that loseth his life for my sake findeth it." The greatest in the kingdom was he who was like the little child and the servant of all. Love to all men was to make us like our Father in heaven. Says a writer on this subject: "You cannot develop inclusiveness from exclusiveness. The latter *shuts out* while the former *invites in.* They are in direct opposition to one another. The principle underlying this worldwide inclusiveness is called *agape.*"[8] This *agape,* or love in the universal Christian sense, was utterly unknown in Christ's day. Hence, we

conclude, there was not possible any natural transition from contemporary to Christian ethics.

234. Consider for a moment the destructive results of Christ's work upon contemporary Judaism, and the implacable hostility of the Jews becomes clear. He annihilated the entire Jewish system. Temple, priesthood and sacrifices vanished in due time under his sway. They became irrelevant and meaningless. A localized worship also received its deathblow at his hands. Scarcely a Jewish ideal, as cherished by the people of his day, was left in its integrity by him. The rulers saw the drift of things and slew him. "The struggle for life" in the usual evolutionary sense in which Christ engaged with his environment ended at the outset in complete disaster to him and his cause, by his death on the cross. Not a trace of its renewal appears until after his resurrection. Christ's Jewish environment could never have produced a Christ. The following statements may sum up the case: Contemporary Judaism might have produced (1) A Jew with messianic claims but not a sinless one; (2) a religious reformer but not a redeemer; (3) a political conception of the messianic kingdom but not an ethical one; (4) a national Jewish but not a worldwide altruistic movement; (5) a Messiah with Jewish but not one with divine attributes; (6) a movement launched in the teeth of every existing tendency in the social and political realm outside of Judaism, but not a successful one.

235. In Judaism, however, we find the clew to all

history prior to the advent of Christ. Paul is the type. He interprets Judaism for us. Ceremonial and legal righteousness ended in failure and despair. The law, even in its more spiritual form, was a schoolmaster to lead the soul to Christ. This was, as we might say, the secret function of the law. It prepared for Christ by not being recognized in its earlier stages as a schoolmaster leading to him. It led to him by being honestly tried on its merits and found insufficient. On the Damascus road Saul became Paul when Christ was revealed in him. After his conversion Paul constantly referred to the "mystery" which was committed unto him to make known to his brethren. This mystery was the new way of righteousness by faith in Christ, which must take the place of Pharisaic and legal righteousness. Thus to Paul was Christianity the most radical and revolutionary of forces. It entered his life from above. It could never have found access otherwise. If, as is so often and truly asserted, modern Jews are a strong proof of Christianity, it is true in a sense not usually recognized. The Jews are the living embodiment of a divine purpose and fulfillment of prophecy, but they do more. They accentuate and signalize the supernatural and anti-Jewish, and anti-evolutionary nature of the force with which they collided in early Christianity.

236. Glance hastily now at the ground we have covered. Judaism led to Christ by ending in moral despair. It is thus that it becomes the key to the

general movement. In like manner we recognize that the moral, religious and intellectual despair of contemporary heathenism prepared the way for Christ. Everywhere the deep cry of the soul was for the bread of life, and chiefly because everywhere it had recognized in horror the lamentable fact that it had been trying to feed upon a stone instead of bread, a serpent instead of a fish. "The fulness of times" was the recognition of the emptiness of the morals and religions of the times. Christianity was the *Plenum,* which came at the right moment from above to fill this *vacuum.* Thus we see how Christ came to meet conditions created by human experience but was not evolved out of that experience.

237. Christ, then, was not the product merely of the forces immanent in the world before he came. Yet he was not violently thrust into the world. There was a divine preparation for Christ. A movement from above kept pace with that below. If God broke the silence of the ages in the most satisfying way when the voice of Jesus sounded over the Judean hills it was not the first time he had spoken. Jewish prophecy shows this. Indeed, God had been at work preparing the world for Christ's advent. The facts are familiar. They need not detain us. The political unity of the world under the sway of Rome; the commercial unity resulting therefrom; the linguistic unity of the known world in the well-nigh universal prevalence of the Greek language—these were the conditions which made it possible for the Messiah to address

as his audience not the Jews merely but the race. The Roman roads were the highway and the Greek language the medium and the widespread Jewish synagogues the connecting link, so that a religion owing its origin to the Jewish race could become universal.

238. This religion did not owe its origin to the Jewish race in the naturalistic sense, as we have seen. Israel was the channel into which was poured a stream from above. We must now look at the stream. It appears conspicuously in Old Testament prophecy. Prophetic optimism was the spiritual blossom on the stock of Israel which was its chief glory. The golden age of Israel was not in the past as with other peoples, but in the future. The splendor of that age was to be not material but ethical. The ethical and religious conceptions underlie all the imagery borrowed from the Davidic kingdom, pointing to Messiah's reign. There is not space for considering details of prophecy here; nor is there need. The impressiveness of the argument for Christianity from prophecy is greatly enhanced by viewing it in its larger aspect. Prophecies of Christ there are beyond question. Much controversy has taken place regarding some of them, as the *Immanuel* passage, for example, in the seventh chapter of Isaiah. But when all is said, *pro* and *con*, about such passages there remains standing and towering above the common level of thought in the heart of this ancient literature the radiant column of Messianic expectation. No critical ingenuity has been able to destroy it. The future Messiah rises to the

mind of the prophet as the "shoot out of the stock of Jesse" (Isaiah xi. 1); or as the governor who shall issue forth from Bethlehem (Micah v. 2), or as the Branch who shall deal wisely and execute justice in the land (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, and Zech. iii. 8); or as King coming to Jerusalem, lowly and riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass (Zech. ix. 9); or as the ideal king who is to reign upon the throne of David forever and ever, whose name is to be called, the Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace (Isaiah ix. 6, 7). These and other prophecies present an irreducible messianic element. The prophecies in Isaiah regarding the suffering servant of Jehovah find the completed fulfillment only in Christ (Isaiah liii., &c.).

But Israel was a prophetic race. Its total life was a prophecy. There were prophetic elements therein which appeared as such only when they were gathered up in Christ. And they were all gathered up in him. Consider how Christ is related to the total life of Israel. The law terminated in him serving as a tentative provision until he came, and reaching maturity in him. Prophecy culminated in him the greatest of the prophets. He was the ideal and final priest. Sacrifice reached its full stature and was canceled in his supreme sacrifice. The significance of the temple itself was exhausted in his person. He was the temple, man's mode of fellowship with God. Probably his deep religious experience in the temple when a boy, as recorded in the synoptic record, finds its key in his

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awakening consciousness of his relations to temple, priest and altar. The writer of Hebrews gives us the Jewish interpretation of Christ's realization in himself of the total religious system of Israel. But Christ was also Messianic King. This was the constant note of prophecy regarding him.

239. Note also how Jesus united in himself contradictory elements which no Jew of his day would have dreamed of conceiving thus. How startling the conception of priest and sacrifice in the same individual. The union of priesthood and kingship was intolerable to the Jewish mind. A King of Israel was smitten with leprosy for assuming priestly functions. Another union of contradictories in Christ was that of the human and divine. God wished to be King of Israel in the early days. The desire of the people for a human king was sin on their part. Yet in Christ both the divine will and the human longing find fulfillment. Thus every ideal of Israel converged in Christ in the most startling and unexpected way. The prophets and all the higher spirits of Israel longed for the kingdom of God. But the form it took in Christ, canceling and abolishing rather than purifying the Kingdom of Israel, was foreign to their minds.

It must be clear to the reader now that Christ was no effect produced by causes residing in Israel. He was rather the answer to the total appeal of Israel to the future, which had in it implicit at every point in his day, the confession of inability and failure. Law usually evolves into new stages of law; prophecy

evolves into more elevated or more debased prophets and prophecy; ritual and worship into more elaborate forms; national life into new political organizations. Christ, on the contrary, personalized all these elements in himself, and broke the course of evolution. Yet in him begins a new stage of spiritual evolution under the direction of supernatural forces. The highest individual product, Christ himself, appeared not at the end but at an intermediate point in the upward progress of the race. The crown of the development is to be in a redeemed race which shall reproduce individually and socially his image. Thus we are led to the conclusion that Christ was the embodiment and realization of a supernatural purpose and fitted perfectly into world conditions.

240. We may thus sum what we have said: We have the world's moral and religious emptiness on one side and his fullness on the other; no natural evolution could bridge the chasm between. We have the natural creation culminating in a sinful humanity on one side and his sinless humanity as the crown and goal on the other; no natural evolution can bridge the chasm between. Again, we have the prophetic, civic and religious order of Israel on one side, and at once their annulment and realization in his person on the other; no natural evolution can bridge the chasm between. We are not surprised, then, to find Paul declaring the Being who fills so large a place to be the first and final cause of creation. At least the creative act traveled *through* him, and all things were created unto him (Col. i.).

PART III.

THE EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DATA OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

241. The fact of religious experience is no longer seriously disputed. It is too fundamental in the life of man and is written too largely on every page of history to be denied. All sorts of ways of accounting for it, of course, are in vogue. The important point to be noted is that now at length science recognizes her duty and is beginning to study it as an order of facts in the world. These facts are subject to the operation of law as are the facts of material nature.

242. The limits of this work do not admit of a discussion of religious experience in general. Our task is rather to indicate the bearing of religious experience upon the evidences of Christianity. To this end we must present the evidence not of Mohammedan or Buddhist, but of Christian experience. The fact is there seems to be little *data* of religious experience in the personal sense outside of Christianity. Professor William James has been impressed by this. Speaking of the lack of material other than Christian for his study of religious experience, he says: "The absence of strictly personal confessions is the chief difficulty to the purely literary student who

would like to become acquainted with the inwardness of religions other than the Christian."[1] Moreover, our limits of space demand that we seek only the distinctive forms of Christian experience. This experience must be considered as it appears in its representative types. Whatever residual questions there may be after we have done this, we shall at least have fairly faced the Christian facts. The present chapter, therefore, will be devoted to the data of Christian experience. And the data will consist chiefly of recorded accounts of conversion by those whose character and intelligence warrant the belief that they are trustworthy witnesses, and whose lives have been rich in the ethical and spiritual fruits of Christianity.

243. We begin with the conversion of Paul the apostle to the gentiles as related by himself.

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of our fathers, being jealous for God, even as ye are all this day: and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring them also that were there unto Jerusalem in bonds to be punished.

"And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about

me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts xxii. 3-15).

"For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and made havoc of it: and I advanced in the Jews' re-

ligion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia: and again I returned unto Damascus" (Gal. i. 11-17).

244. We give next the experience of the apostle John. "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full.

"And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 1-6).

245. One of the most interesting of the early confessions is that of Polycarp, whose martyrdom occurred early in the second century.

"He looked up to heaven and said, 'O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of Thee, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of the whole race of the righteous who live before Thee, I give Thee thanks that Thou has counted me worthy of this day and this hour, that I should have a part in the number of Thy martyrs, in the cup of Thy Christ, to the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, through the incorruption imparted by the Holy Ghost. Among whom may I be accepted before Thee this day as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, according as Thou, the faithful and true God, hast fore-ordained, hast revealed beforehand, and hast now fulfilled. Wherefore also I praise Thee for all things, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, along with the everlasting and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, through whom to Thee, with him and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and to all ages. Amen.'" It would be difficult to quote from any post-apostolic source a more complete summary of the Christian faith, alike in its dogmatic contents and in its moral inspiration.[2]

246. St. Hilary's account of his own religious experience is also suggestive.

"God the Word was made flesh, that, through God the Word made flesh, flesh might go forward to God the Word. * * *

"This doctrine of the divine mystery my mind joyfully adopted, going forward to God through the

flesh, and being called to a new birth through faith, and committed to its own power that it might obtain a heavenly regeneration; recognizing the care bestowed on it by its Father and Creator. * * *

"And that my soul might not be impeded by any error of worldly wisdom, it was further taught to have a most complete faith in this pious confession by the Apostle in his divine words: 'Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' * * *

"In this state of ease, then, and conscious security my mind had rested, rejoicing in its hopes, and so far from fearing the coming of death, that it even reckoned it as that of eternal life. And this its bodily life it not only did not consider as wearisome or disagreeable, but looked on as being what letters are to childhood, what medicine is to the sick, what swimming is to the shipwrecked, what learning is to young men, what military service is to those who are in future to command; an endurance, in fact, of the present state of things, profitable towards the reward

of a blessed immortality. Furthermore, that which is believed for itself, it also preached to others in the ministry of the priesthood which had been laid on it, extending its own gift to the service of the general weal."[2]

247. The following vigorous language taken from Luther's treatise *De Libertate Christiana,* is of the nature of a personal experience.

"Christian faith has appeared to many an easy matter; of whom not a few have classed it among the moral virtues, nay, have made it merely a sort of attendant on virtue. And this they have done because they have never proved what it is in their own experience, nor internally tasted its power. Whereas no one can truly describe it himself, nor really understand it when truly described, unless he has at some time, under the fiery trial of pressing conflicts, tasted the spirit of it in his own soul. And he who has really tasted this, even in the smallest degree, can never write of it, speak of it, think of it, nor hear of it enough; for it is, as Christ calls it, 'a living fountain springing up into everlasting life' (John iv.).

"As to myself, though I may not boast of an abundant stock of this grace (for I deeply feel my straitened deficiency), yet I do trust that out of the great and various tribulations under which I have been exercised I have gotten of faith a certain drachm; and that I can therefore treat of it, if not more eloquently, yet certainly more substantially than

any of those learned and subtle ones have hitherto done in all their labored disputations. * * *

"But you will ask, Which word of God is this, and how must it be made use of, for there are so many words of God? I answer, the Apostle Paul, Rom. i, explains which it is. The Gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was incarnate, and crucified, and who is risen again, and glorified by the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier. For the preaching of Christ, feeds, justifies, sets free, and saves the soul that believeth what is preached. For faith alone is the saving and effectual use of the word of God, as in Romans x, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Again, 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' And again, Romans i, 'The just shall live by his faith.' Nor can the word of God be received and embraced by any works whatever, but by faith only. And therefore it is clear that, as the soul needs nothing but the word unto life and righteousness, it is justified, without any works, by faith only. For if it could be justified by anything else, it would have no need of the word, and consequently no need of faith."[4]

248. John Bunyan also shows us how powerfully Christ laid hold upon him.

"I must first pass a sentence of death," he says, "upon everything that can properly be called a thing of this life, even to reckon myself, my wife, my chil-

dren, my health, my enjoyments, and all, as dead to me, and myself as dead to them; to trust in God through Christ, as touching the world to come; and as touching this world, to count the grave my house, to make my bed in darkness, and to say to corruption, Thou art my father, and to the worm, Thou art my mother and sister. . . . The parting with my wife and my poor children hath often been to me as the pulling of my flesh from my bones, especially my poor blind child who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure that the wind should blow upon thee. But yet I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you."[5]

249. Adolphe Monod accentuates the note of sadness which so often marks the early stages of religious experience.

"My sadness," he says, "was without limit, and having got entire possession of me, it filled my life from the most indifferent external acts to the most secret thoughts, and corrupted at their source my feelings, my judgment, and my happiness. It was then that I saw that to expect to put a stop to this disorder by my reason and my will, which were themselves diseased, would be to act like a blind man who should pretend to correct one of his eyes by the aid of the other equally blind one. I had then no resource

save in some influence from without. I remembered the promise of the Holy Ghost; and what the positive declarations of the Gospel had never succeeded in bringing home to me, I learned at last from necessity, and believed, for the first time in my life, in this promise, in the only sense in which it answered the needs of my soul, in that, namely, of a real external supernatural action, capable of giving me thoughts, and taking them away from me, and exerted on me by a God as truly master of my heart as he is of the rest of nature. Renouncing, then, all merit, all strength, abandoning all my personal resources, and acknowledging no other title to his mercy than my own utter misery, I went home and threw myself on my knees, and prayed as I never yet prayed in my life. From this day onward a new interior life began for me; not that my melancholy had disappeared, but it had lost its sting. Hope had entered into my heart, and once entered on the path, the God of Jesus Christ, to whom I then had learned to give myself up, little by little did the rest."[6]

250. Hudson Taylor's experience is very distinctly marked.

"Whilst I was reading the evangelical treatise, I was soon struck by an expression: 'The finished work of Christ.' 'Why,' I asked of myself, 'does the author use these terms? Why does he not say, "the atoning work?"' Then these words, 'It is finished,' presented themselves to my mind. 'What is it that is finished?' I asked, and in an instant my mind replied: 'A per-

fect expiation for sin; entire satisfaction had been given; the debt has been paid by the Substitute. Christ had died for our sins; not for ours only, but for those of all men. If, then, the entire work is finished, all the debt paid, what remains for me to do?' In another instant the light was shed through my mind by the Holy Ghost, and the joyous conviction was given me that nothing more was to be done, save to fall on my knees, to accept this Saviour and his love, to praise God forever."[7]

251. S. H. Hadley, the well-known Christian worker of New York, gives a vivid portrayal of the steps leading to his conversion.

"One Tuesday evening I sat in a saloon in Harlem, a homeless, friendless, dying drunkard. I had pawned or sold everything that would bring a drink. I could not sleep unless I was dead drunk. I had not eaten for days, and for four nights preceding I had suffered with delirium tremens, or the horrors, from midnight till morning. I had often said, 'I will never be a tramp. I will never be cornered, for when that time comes, if ever it comes, I will find a home in the bottom of the river.' But the Lord so ordered it that when that time did come I was not able to walk one quarter of the way to the river. As I sat there thinking, I seemed to feel some great and mighty presence. I did not know then what it was. I did learn afterwards that it was Jesus, the sinner's friend. I walked up to the bar and pounded it with my fist till I made the glasses rattle. Those who stood by drinking

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looked on with scornful curiosity. I said I would never take another drink, if I died on the street, and really I felt as though that would happen before morning. Something said, 'If you want to keep this promise, go and have yourself locked up.' I went to the nearest station-house and had myself locked up.
* * *

"A blessed whisper said, 'Come;' the devil said, 'Be careful.' I halted but a moment, and then, with a breaking heart, I said, 'Dear Jesus, can you help me?' Never with mortal tongue can I describe that moment. Although up to that moment my soul had been filled with indescribable gloom, I felt the glorious brightness of the noonday sun shine into my heart. I felt I was a free man. Oh, the precious feeling of safety, of freedom, of resting on Jesus! I felt that Christ with all his brightness and power had come into my life; that, indeed, old things had passed away and all things had become new.

"From that moment till now I have never wanted a drink of whisky, and I have never seen money enough to make me take one. I promised God that night that if he would take away the appetite for strong drink, I would work for him all my life. He has done his part, and I have been trying to do mine."[8]

252. Sir Algernon Coote's account is brief, but pointed and clear.

"After luncheon we read together the 5th chap-

ter of St. John's Gospel, and the 24th verse showed me that I might believe then and there. We knelt in prayer and praise together, and at 1:45 p. m. on Monday, January 29, 1866, I accepted the gift of 'everlasting life,' and Christ became my Saviour.

"I was just eighteen years of age, and the son of godly parents."[9]

253. Captain A. T. Mahan, the well-known authority on naval subjects, is no less clear.

"I happened one week-day in Lent into a church in Boston. The preacher—I have never known his name—interested me throughout; but one phrase only has remained: 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people'—here he lifted up his hands—'not from hell, but from their sins.' Almost the first words of the first Gospel. I had seen them for years, but at last perceived them. Scales seemed to fall from my eyes, and I began to see Jesus Christ and life, as I had never seen them before. I was then about thirty. Personal religion is but the co-operation of man's will with the power of Jesus Christ, that man's soul, man's whole being may be saved, not for his own profit chiefly, but that he may lay it thus redeemed, thus exalted, at the feet of him who loved him and gave himself for him."[10]

254. The experience of Bishop H. C. G. Moule has a strong evangelical ring.

"That dark time ended by divine mercy, in a full and conscious acceptance, in great need, of our crucified Redeemer, Christ our Sacrifice, in his complete

atonement, as peace and life. The circumstances of that discovery are too sacred for detail. It is enough to say that it was granted to me to make it, and to find in 'Christ for me' the divine answer to that 'exceeding need,' the sight of sin as guilt.

For ever here my rest shall be,
Close to Thy bleeding side;
This all my hope, and all my plea,
For me the Saviour died.

"My short statement, on purpose, closes here. In our Lord Jesus Christ, as indeed I have found, sinful man has to discover treasures and mercies great and wonderful in directions other than that great primary blessing. But 'Christ for me' in the order of thought, and of the divine idea, whether or no in the order of experience, comes first and in the depths."

255. Dr. R. A. Torrey, the well-known evangelist, tells his story and the secret of an assured faith.

"In that awful hour I knelt down and told God that if he would take the awful burden from me, I would preach the Gospel.

"I found peace immediately, and went back to bed and slept. Strangely enough, I did not come out as a Christian at that time, but plunged deeper than ever into a life of worldliness. But I never gave up the resolution of preaching the Gospel; in fact, I told my resolution to many, and I presume most of them thought I was joking, for my life was

anything but that of one prepared to preach the Gospel.

"On my nineteenth birthday (which happened to be on the day of prayer for colleges), I resolved to give up the kind of life I was leading, and some months after that I made a public profession of Christ in the College Chapel, just shortly before my taking my A. B. degree. I returned in the fall to study for the B. D. degree. While in the Divinity School, largely through the influence of Gibbon, I was plunged into utter agnosticism. I determined to know the truth, whether the Bible was the Word of God or not; whether there ever was such a person as Jesus Christ, and whether he was the Son of God or not, and whether there was any God. Out of this darkness I came into the clear light of an assured faith in all the great Christian verities."[12]

256. The following story of J. Ewing shows, like the others, the central place of Christ in religious experience.

"While in this state of purgatorial misery I was one day walking by myself and humming Sankey's hymn, 'There is life for a look at the Crucified One.' After getting through the first verse I came to the second—

Oh, why was He there as the Bearer of sin,
If on Jesus thy guilt was not laid?

"We read in The Acts that Saul of Tarsus was struck down by a light stronger than the noonday sun, and heard a voice from heaven speaking to him.

I was not struck down, nor did I hear a voice from heaven, but the light from above pierced my mind as truly as it did that of Saul. In a moment I saw where my salvation and my peace lay, and also the mistake I had been making. I had been inverting God's plans by seeking peace and forgiveness before trusting in Christ. But now I saw that my salvation depended on a Person, and not on any religious exercises—on Jesus and not on my own faithfulness. Then I could actually realize how the lame man in the temple stood up and walked and praised God, or how Zachæus received the Saviour joyfully into his house. My soul was set free, the chain was loosed, and the Word of God became my joy and my delight.

"Many years have passed since then, and many times I have been in engagements, where bullets have been flying and shells bursting and screaming all around, but I have never lost the consciousness that Christ was crucified for me, and my sweetest periods of trust and communion have been in hours of most deadly peril. After fourteen years' service I took my discharge from the army, and soon after entered the service of the Army Scripture Readers' Society. My one desire has ever been to bring others to the same Saviour whom I have found, and my grateful joy has been that I have had the happiness of leading many a soldier and many a civilian to the same precious Lord to whom I was led myself."[13]

257. Rev. Steve Holcombe, a converted gambler,

has for many years exerted a strong influence for good in Louisville, Ky., in the conduct of a mission. He enjoys the confidence of the public and his power for good increases with the passing years. The following is his story, much condensed:

"From the day I joined his church," says Mr. Holcombe, "that minister seemed to understand me better than I understood myself. He seemed to know and did tell me my own secrets. He led me into an understanding of myself and my situation. I saw now what had been the cause of my restlessness, my wanderings, my weariness and my woe. I saw what it was I needed, and I prayed as earnestly as I knew how from that time. I attended all the services—preaching, Sunday-school, prayer-meeting, class-meeting in any and all kinds of weather, walking frequently all the way from Second street to Portland, a distance of three miles, because I was making too little to allow me to ride on the street-car. But with all this, I felt something was yet wanting. I began to see that I could not make any advance in goodness and happiness so long as I was burdened with the unforgiven guilt of forty years of sin and crime. I grew worse and heavier until I felt I must have relief, if relief could be had. One day I went in the back office of my business house, after the others had all gone home, and shut myself up and determined to stay there and pray until I should find relief. The room was dark, and I had prayed, I know not how long, when such a great

sense of relief and gladness and joy came to me that it seemed to me as if a light had flooded the room, and the only words I could utter or think of were these three: 'Jesus of Nazareth.' It seemed to me they were the sweetest words I had ever heard. Never, till then, did the feeling of blood-guiltiness leave me. It was only the blood of Christ that could wash from my conscience the blood of my fellow-man."[14]

258. We give next a scientist's confession of faith. This bearer of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from a German university, Miss Emily L. Gregory, associate professor of botany at Bryn Mawr, later a member of the botanical staff of the University of Pennsylvania, and founder of the department of botany in Barnard College, New York, is a typical example of the struggle and triumph of faith in a modern scientist. As a result of her scientific studies she said she had given up all faith except a dim belief in a "First Cause." A sermon on Christ's feeding the multitude with a few small loaves and fishes illustrates the manner of her spiritual awakening. She says: "This was among the first, if not the very first, of those sermons which came to me like a revelation. The idea of that sermon was something like this: The work of God's ministers was to stand before the people and to carry to them constantly the bread of life received directly from God himself. Hitherto the miracle of the bread and fishes had been to me only a stumbling-

block; I could not explain it, I did not believe it, and there it ended. Here was a new idea; the story meant something quite different from the mere satisfying of physical needs—the spiritual hunger was thus to be satisfied; and in the prayer that followed I recognized dimly but surely the application of the principles brought out in the sermon. Without any increase in my belief, with no violence to my intellectual convictions, a truth of which I had hitherto been ignorant was revealed to me, a sense of the real meaning of the bread of life."

Then followed a long, severe struggle with doubt and pride. The light came gradually, however, and she confesses. "Now everything had changed to me; confession that I wished to believe in Christ as the Son of God, admission that I was willing to accept this faith as a child must accept it, that it was above and beyond the power of all human intellect to analyze or explain, but that it was God's free gift to all who were willing to take it from his hand in the manner which he himself had prescribed—these two steps had brought me into the position where God could bless me with the consciousness of his presence, and from this time forever onward I could know him whom to know aright is life eternal." Again she says: "I simply accepted what had come to me as coming from God himself, for these two reasons: First, the strong sense of God's presence; second, the clearness of spiritual vision which enabled me to see and understand how different God's way for me to

come into the Kingdom was from the way I had chosen for myself."

There was much delay, however, and continued struggles before the decisive step was taken. "I was coming in exactly the order indicated by the expression in the sermon before quoted: I believed neither the Old Testament nor the New, nor even in the divinity of Christ, in the sense in which I now do; I had taken only the first step, belief in prayer, belief that God was leading me through his Spirit; the rest was coming to me more slowly, but none the less surely. I asked, among other questions, with how little belief I might dare to come into the church. The story of the birth and death of Christ and of his resurrection—must I be able to say I had a clear, intelligent conception of these things? Only a few facts were made the basis of my faith. Did I believe that it was really God's hand that was leading me? Of this I felt no more doubt than of the evidence of my senses. Then a few steps at a time in obedience to his will, and the rest would come to me. This is about what was said to me regarding the mere matter of my belief."

God and Christ were revealed to her: "I believed in God because he had revealed himself to me; in Christ, for the same reason. Therefore, Christ was now living, and he must have been raised from the dead in some form, as the story of his death is unquestionable. The miracles I did not attempt to explain, but held fast to my belief and trust in what

had been so clearly revealed to me, and which continued real to me through my prayers."

This scientist attained complete peace in God through Christ, and united with the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church of New York City. Regarding miracles she says: "The belief in miracles is apparently at variance with the principles of science, and raises many difficult questions. For an answer to this, I make use of the same key: 'I bow before the mystery concealed in a bit of living protoplasm.' It is for me no harder to acknowledge my total inability to explain the meaning of some of the miracles, than to acknowledge my inability to answer the apparently simple and direct questions of science. Moreover, I know not how far some of the miracles are to be taken as literal facts, and how far as allegorical representations. But the Bible is to me no longer a sealed book, though still one with many mysteries. I believe that the more clearly and fully I am able to understand the one great mystery, our personal relation to Christ and through him to the Father, the more clearly I shall be able to comprehend the questions which necessarily cluster around this relation." The following words written to her pastor indicate something of the wonder and joy and fullness of assurance which were hers: "I wish I could give to you some of that rich blessing that makes my cup running over, the blessing of God's loving presence with me, the consciousness of it when I lie down to sleep and when I wake. A few years ago it was all

incredible to me. How can you or I ever doubt the power of God working among us and through his children? When I look back to those years it seems to me no greater miracle ever happened than the change in my heart. I know that you are more used to such miracles than I, but I am sure you cannot be so familiar with them that they do not fill your soul with joy."

Rev. W. H. P. Faunce, D.D., now President of Brown University, whose ministry guided her in her intellectual struggles, says in a brief introduction to the pamphlet containing the story from which the above extracts are taken: "Just as she wrote it, let it stand—the clear testimony of one abreast of modern knowledge, thoroughly versed in the scientific method, deeply convinced of the reality of Christian faith. Such witness is worth volumes of argument. Our generation is turning wearily away from speculative discussion, and listening eagerly for the present witness of a present God. 'We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.' "[15]

In conclusion it remains only to observe that the foregoing examples, taken from a period of nearly two thousand years, and striking every leading note in the pain and ecstacy of the soul's return to God, exhibit at once the variety and unity which are such distinguishing features of the religious experience of which Christ is the center.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ANALYSIS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

Having set forth in the last chapter some of the data of Christian experience, it is next in order to study this experience by means of analysis, by considering it in the elements, which together constitute the whole. Thus we shall gain a view of its value as an evidence of Christianity. But before we come to this task several remarks need to be made.

259. The reader has doubtless noted that the examples of experience we have given are somewhat uniform in character. They belong to one general type. At first this may seem a weakness and an attempt to "make up" a case, so to speak. Then, too, it may be considered unscientific. Why not give all varieties of religious experience instead of those of a particular type, it may be asked. But as soon as the nature of the proposed argument is understood neither of the above objections will stand. The examples of Christian experience which have been given are held to be distinctive and characteristic Christian types. The existence of other types is not denied, but the present assumption is that these are deviations from the ideal. They are fragments or parts of a religious experience—broken lights, so to speak—

which are only found combined into a perfect whole in the distinctive Christian experience. It is claimed that the method pursued here is scientific. It is a study of facts. The careful and accurate analysis and interpretation of facts are a part of the process. All inferences and conclusions are based on the facts thus studied.

260. That we are moving in a realm of facts in studying Christian experience is a point requiring emphasis. Doctrines inevitably grow out of the facts of experience and some of them are involved directly in experience. Of course, also ideas are necessary in grasping the meaning of facts. But here we are dealing with a realm primarily not of ideas or doctrines but of facts. The Christian has an experience, as he believes, not merely of thoughts but of objects, and knows himself in relation to those objects. The fact that these realities which enter into his experience are spiritual, renders them no less but rather more real. Professor James, speaking of the unseen world, says: "So far as our ideal impulses originate in this region we belong to it in a more intimate sense than that in which we belong to the visible world, for we belong in the most intimate sense wherever our ideals belong."[1] Of course, we must not prejudge the question as to what these spiritual realities are in themselves. We are to study the evidence and conclude according to it.

261. Knowledge of the spiritual realities comes to us in much the same way as ordinary knowledge.

As sound reaches us from external objects through the auditory and vision through the optic nerve, so knowledge of spiritual being external to us comes through our spiritual susceptibilities, through intellect, conscience, fellings and will. The only requirement in the case of sense or spiritual impressions is that we shall have capacities for and correspondences with objects external to ourselves. One chief difference in the two kinds of impressions is that those which are spiritual affect our entire nature, moral, religious and intellectual, while sense impressions may affect the knowing faculty alone.

262. Even those who have not the inner experience of the Christian life should study it as an order of facts in the experience of others. This order of facts is as open to scientific investigation as any other. As Professor Romanes said, we may study it as a "phenomenon" even if we may not as a "noumenon."[2] If not presented to us within our own natures it is presented without in the lives of others. Material nature is not studied from within but only from without, and science is based on such study. The highest Christian certainty, it is true, comes only through the two-fold method. When it thus comes it is the highest of all certainties. We know most indubitably the things of which we ourselves are conscious. Nevertheless a relative and real certainty as to the causes and results of Christian experience ought to be possible without the inner experience. Science takes note of "coexistences" and "sequences;"

that is, things which happen together and things which follow each other. But it does not stop there. Science generalizes about observed facts. Professor G. A. Coe, after referring to the fact that science does not assume or deny the presence of God in nature, remarks that to look for uniformities in religious facts "is simply to assume that religious experiences are not a chaotic mass in which consequents have no respect for antecedents."[3]

263. What, then, is Christian experience? It is the state or condition produced in the mental, moral and spiritual nature of man when he conforms to the conditions which Christianity declares to be necessary to union and fellowship with God. To experience is to learn by "practical trial or proof;" "to try or prove by use, by suffering, or enjoyment." "Christian experience," says President C. Cuthbert Hall, "represents the religious value of Christianity for one who believes it . . . ; its contribution to the completeness of his life in the present world . . . the measure in which it makes life in the present world more worth living."[4] Christian experience covers the entire Christian life and not merely the initial act of conversion. It includes the operation in the Christian of all the incentives to activity and spiritual growth, the consolations in sorrow, the motives which lead to the broadening and deepening of the spiritual life, and the hopes for the future which flow from the peculiarly Christian mode of regarding life and the world.

264. What, then, is the initial stage of Christian experience? How does it begin? Some writers endeavor to fix upon one significant phase of the experience and make this the essence of the change. One author makes the primary act of Christian experience the choice of duty as such.[5] Another says it consists of (a) *an uneasiness,* or sense of something wrong with us as we naturally stand, and (b) *a solution,* a sense that we are saved from the wrongness by making connection with the higher powers.[6] But neither of these statements is adequate. The more approved and satisfactory way of studying the human mind is to take as the unit of consciousness not a single thought, feeling or volition, but rather all the thoughts, feelings and volitions present at any given moment in consciousness. If, then, we can look into the crystal stream of consciousness at some one moment and mark all its contents we reach the unit of measurement, so to speak. The first stage of Christian experience is the new birth, or, in popular language, conversion. The examples we have already given will serve as material for our study. Let us then make the plunge into the depths of Christian consciousness at the moment when the soul has passed through the great change. No two experiences will be identical. In some the emotions, in others the intellect, in yet others the will or the conscience will seem to predominate. But in all, the essential factors will be present. To some the change

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will have come suddenly, while to others it will have resulted from a long period of preparation.

265. As we look within the consciousness of the regenerated soul the first and most noteworthy discovery we make is a surrendered will. The will was the last faculty to yield, but most important of all. It is the imperial faculty of our nature and leads all the others. This act of the will was preceded by reflection. The intellect considered the message which had reached it through preaching or personal influence or reading. There were in many cases perplexity and doubt. This activity of thought, however, was due to an awakened moral sense, which took the form of self-condemnation, or a longing for a higher ideal or simply an "uneasiness," as Professor James states it.

Doubtless if we should trace the soul state we are studying to its beginning we would find that the conscience or moral faculty took the initiative. The intellect was thus aroused, and the will at length yielded. We described this act of the will as a surrender. This, however, is only a part of the truth. It was also a choice. The one act of the will which is the very essence of the spiritual change on the human side consists, in the language of the New Testament, of repentance and faith. Repentance is the change of mind towards and repudiation of the wrongness of the life. Faith is the act of the will by which an active trust is reposed in Another.

266. So far we have seen the soul itself in action

in the great initial movement in Christian experience. We have, however, only half analyzed the state of the soul. The soul by the act of the will already described commits itself to Another. The most significant element in this Christian experience is that there is a consciousness in it not only of an *I*, but also of a *Thou*. The other Person whom the soul is conscious of trusting is Jesus Christ. The statement was made on a preceding page that the Christian experience deals not merely with thoughts, but with realities. The great Reality of Christian experience is Jesus the Christ, through the Holy Spirit. More will be said later about this indwelling of Christ through the Spirit. For the present what it means is, of course, not the physical body of Christ but the recreation in Christian character of the moral image of Christ as that image appears in the records of his historic manifestation.

267. In the next place it is necessary to note the results in experience of the act of faith and the entrance into our consciousness of another Person. These results may be set forth as *religious, moral* and *intellectual*. The result in the religious direction is "adjustment with the higher powers." "The peace of God which passeth all understanding" enters and possesses the soul. "Being therefore justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). "The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us" (Rom. v. 5). Forgive-

ness, reconciliation and a sense of fellowship with God, the total religious need of man is met and provided for in Christian experience.

268. Closely related to the religious are the moral results of the experience. The first to be named is the new ethical ideal. A passion for righteousness marks the believer's whole bearing. But this ideal is not an abstract but a concrete one, even Christ himself. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal. ii. 20) is the exclamation of the apostle of the Gentiles. "I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. iii. 8).

But there is more than a new ethical ideal; there is also ethical reinforcement. New life comes, new power and an ability to achieve in the moral realm. The man is lifted to a new moral level. That is, the man has experienced redemption, deliverance from sin. Nothing is more real to him than his sense, in every part of his being, of freedom, emancipation from shackles which bound the soul. At first this new moral level is not necessarily a higher one externally than any non-Christian life, but higher for him. The real difference is internal. His morality is not conventional but vital, with capacity for indefinite growth. Thousands of Christians testify that the tonic to the will which comes with conversion is

the most astounding fact of all. This is peculiarly a mark of Christian experience. The other element in the moral change to be named is love. Love to God and love to man to the extent of forgiving enemies, returning good for evil and enduring all things, even death itself for Christ and fellowmen, are distinctive Christian traits. These are not, of course, perfectly realized but are present as ideals.

269. There is also an intellectual result. The chief thing to be noted here is intellectual satisfaction. This does not mean that all mysteries are cleared up. Speculative and even doctrinal difficulties remain often, but they no longer seem relevant. The scientist, it will be remembered, stumbled over the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, but after her conversion it ceased to harass her. The explanation of this result of experience has already been intimated. It is not a repudiation of the intellect or abdication of reason. Conviction ineradicable arises in the spiritual realm just as in the physical. "That which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld and our hands handled concerning the Word of Life" (1 John i. 1) brings the mind to a state of rest.

270. Arguments, reasonings, are in one realm. Objects, facts, things, are in another. The realm of experience is the realm of objects, facts, things. Mystery remains behind these spiritual objects and facts to be gradually cleared away, but the facts and objects are the most stable of realities. The searcher finds truth when he finds Christ; afterwards his

search for truth is into the meaning of Christ. This is the deeply significant message for men troubled with intellectual difficulties about the faith of the Gospel. Do not confine your approach to the thought-side of Christianity; approach it on the fact-side. This is the scientific method of approach. The case against Christianity is due chiefly to the unscientific way doubters and deniers approach it. Science scorns the *a priori* way of deciding questions, the way which says it *must* be thus or thus, instead of making the experiment.

271. Faith is not the antithesis of thought, but only of sight. Faith is an act of the will relating you to new realities, new objects. Act as if the invisible Christ were present and accessible, and you will not be met by vacancy. He will respond and make manifest his response to you. The books on psychology have a familiar experiment to show that we all have a "blind spot." Hold a white piece of cardboard with certain black marks upon it before the eyes at a certain distance. Move it back and forth and up and down, and when one of the black marks reaches a particular point it will suddenly vanish. This somewhat startling result can easily be verified by any one. Now the message of Christian experience is of a like nature. It says relate your mental and moral nature to Christ in a given way and you will discover that you have not a "blind spot" but a "seeing spot," that the soul may thus come into connection with a new

object which to it is as real and as convincing as the experiment with the cardboard.

You are not asked to give up your reason by Christianity, but only to let it have the benefit of a moral renewal through the apprehension of a world of spiritual realities. The only assumption underlying this invitation is that the moral cleansing will not vitiate the processes of the mind. A man will not think any less clearly because he has a pure heart.

272. Such, then, is Christian experience in its initial stage. These are the objects which appear as we gaze into the clear stream of consciousness. The "new birth," or the "birth from above," is the New Testament designation of the experience. The aim has been not to deny or disparage forms of conversion which are unlike those made use of. Human hearts take hold of the religious life from many sides. The aim has been to indicate the essential elements in Christian experience. These are: (1) The act of the will involved in repentance and faith; (2) the object of faith, God as revealed in Jesus Christ, who is inwardly made known to the believer through the Holy Spirit; (3) the results in religious readjustment, moral reinforcement and intellectual peace. All these elements are not equally present in all experiences. Some elements seem to be not consciously present at all in some conversions. But notwithstanding these facts it is claimed that conversion as thus analyzed is the great generic type and norm of religious experience. All other genuine types can be explained and

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are perfected by this normal type. They are the imperfect instances of the experience which it alone perfectly embodies. It is the genus and the others are varieties. If it be denied, then it remains that conversion as we have described it is itself a great phenomenon of Christian history and as such is worthy of study. From it alone without other aid the Christian contention can be established. If this be established other claims cease to be pertinent or relevant.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

273. It is next in order to answer an important question. "You have not proved that Christ and God are in the consciousness in religious experience," it may be urged. "You do not know that the experience is not wholly subjective, a product of your own fancy. What evidence have you that a divine Being meets you and communes with you? Particularly how do you know that Christ as the Revealer of the Father enters into consciousness through the Holy Spirit?" In reply it will not be attempted here to prove the essential relations in the Godhead from experience alone. The formal doctrine of the Trinity belongs to the thought-side of Christianity rather than to the realm of experience, and can be left to systematic theology. Nevertheless there is an experiential basis for the doctrine which will appear as we proceed, and the Scriptures complete it. Experience, however, does teach that the change wrought in religious experience proceeds from a power external to man, which is personal and which belongs to a higher order of being than man himself. The argument follows:

274. The first step towards the proof is a fact

of our own consciousness. The fact is this: Whenever we are aware of the presence of an external object through the evidences of our senses we know it in the same act and at the same moment as both within and without consciousness. The tree that I look at through my study window is present within as an image on the retina of my eye and thus reaches my knowing faculty. I know it thus within. But in the same act of perception I know it as apart from and outside of me. It is "given" to me as within and without in the same act. In the same way I know spiritual results in my consciousness. A power enters the soul at conversion which is new and foreign to me. I know it as coming from without and producing an effect within at the same moment and in the same act. It reinforces my will and lifts me into a new sense of power and peace. I do not prove by argument to myself that it is external to me while producing an effect within me, just as I do not argue to prove the existence of the tree outside my window.

275. But let us be careful here. Modern scientific psychology is delving into the depths of Christian experience and is destined to render great service to Christianity when it thinks its problems through a little more thoroughly. It is moving towards the Christian point of view rapidly, in its best representatives. Psychology connects all mind states with brain states. Every thought reaches the brain through a sense organ —that is, a nerve—and registers itself there, just as a

bird flitting past might alight for a moment and leave its track in the sand. As our thoughts come and go they all leave their tracks in our brain substance through the nerves. One set of thoughts crowds the preceding set into the background and the first set drops out of consciousness. But these vanishing thoughts are not annihilated. They are simply stored away in the subconscious mind, which Professor James thinks is the greatest discovery of recent psychology. That is, they are registered on the brain ready to be excited into activity again by the proper stimulus. The subconscious mind then is a sort of back room of the intellect, where we keep all our stores of knowledge. But the conscious is always in communication with the subconscious mind. The intellectual front room opens into the back room.

Now the psychology of religion is telling us with much insistence that religious experience is closely connected with changes in the back room of the intellect. When religious influences stir our emotional, mental, moral or volitional nature, and a struggle ensues, there is an agitation in the subconscious region of the mind, and past thoughts, aspirations, hopes and fears form a sort of new combination, resulting in a new moral purpose. When the feelings become strong enough there is an "explosion," so to speak, from the back room into the front room of the mind, resulting in conversion, with its new peace and joy and moral purpose. This, I say, is the way many psychologists explain conversion.

276. Psychologists of religious experience do not necessarily deny the supernatural in conversion; indeed, some of them admit it. The subconscious mind they think has a back door itself through which the supernatural enters. The tendency, however, of the above theory when unqualified by other things is, at first sight, to leave the problem of the cause behind experience unsolved. The power *seems* to come from without, because it rushes in from the back room of the mind. Some psychologists leave the matter open or assert that only natural causes in our past experience produce the result. Nothing came from without. Everything, they assert, came from the subconscious mind.

277. But if psychology raises a difficulty it also furnishes the basis for an answer. It teaches that every mind-state was preceded or is attended by a brain-state. But in conversion things absolutely new enter consciousness. We can, indeed, analyze all *ordinary* mind-states into the results of present or past sense impressions, tracks left on the sands of memory by the birds of sensation and of thought. In remembered dreams even we can discover always the elements in past experience. The combination may be new, but the elements are old. In conversion, on the contrary, factors enter experience which were never there before. The personal presence of the Other is one of these. The moral direction of life also is reversed. It is in many cases in the teeth of the whole past tendency of the life. A moral elevation

and motive are attained unlike any faintest imagining of the past; indeed, sometimes nullifying and reversing distinct life-principles previously held. Witness the apostle Paul, and many others. No combination of past tendencies can transform a vile sinner suddenly into a saint. No union of shadows can ever produce sunshine. The stream of consciousness flowing downhill morally for life is not suddenly set to flowing uphill by a chance combination of memories. The Mississippi river was never known to start permanently to flowing northwardly by a sudden confluence of eddies. The point here is not a denial of all connection between the new element which enters experience and previous mental states, or the assertion that this new element breaks in with violence and overrides the will. The point is rather this, that however it may enter and whatever previous factor of experience it may employ in so doing, this new factor in itself is recognized as new to experience. It is this irreducible difference between conversion and other experiences which is leading the psychologists to modify the general theory at least sufficiently to admit a supernatural element in conversion.

278. But the Christian is not confined to his experiences in conversion for evidence. After conversion the experience continues. He has direct relations with the Power. He is visited by it and often by conscious act enters into relations with it. So that he has repeated proofs that the original act of conversion was indeed due to a Power apart from and

above him. Above him, I say; for it could not have proceeded from the society of men. No observation and no science reveals to him anything among men capable of working in the manner and producing the results of his new birth.

279. But is this power from without a person as well? If so, is it Jesus Christ? Professor William James does not concede the evangelical claim that Christ is the author of religious experience, but he has been much impressed with the personal form it takes. He says that personality is the pivot round which the religious life revolves. "Religious thought is carried on in terms of personality, this being in the world of religion the one fundamental fact. To-day, quite as much as in any previous age, the religious individual tells you that the divine meets him on the basis of his personal concerns."[1] Taking Professor James' statement that religious experience is first an "uneasiness," due to a sense of something wrong, and then a "solution" through adjustment with the higher powers, let us see how the adjustment with the higher powers works practically.

280. (1) The results produced in us by the adjustment with the higher powers are all personal. They are results in intellect, conscience, feelings and will. Try to think of the "higher powers" as impersonal. Suppose them to be merely forces or laws, or the abstract universal principle of pantheism. How then can a mere impersonal force illumine an intellect? How can an abstract principle vary its form

in consciousness so that now it is reinforcement to a feeble will, now truth shining into the mind, now again moral light in the conscience, and at another time or the same time excitement to the emotions. There is no known principle by which we can thus make the transition from the impersonal to the personal. The Hindu philosophy holds that personality is illusion and that man's true destiny is its extinction or reabsorption in the infinite impersonal All. This is the only consistent position for those who deny that the "powers" that work in men in religious experience are personal. But, as Professor James says, the religious phenomenon is personal and it cannot be successfully carried on otherwise.

281. (2) Again, the response which comes from the higher powers takes the form of personal relationships. Forgiveness involves personal relations. Mere law or force cannot forgive. Pardon cannot be thought of except in personal terms. The operations of conscience imply personal relations. The sense of responsibility is inexplicable otherwise. The sense of sonship and Fatherhood which are at the heart of Christian consciousness, of course, cannot be thought of save in terms of personality. We have the spirit of adoption whereby we cry "Abba, Father," which is the New Testament expression for the form our religious experience takes. And so it appears that to empty religious experience of those elements which require personal relations for their expression is virtually to empty it of everything.

282. (3) Still, further, the Christian recognizes plan in his life. "A labour working to an end" through means and forces beyond his control becomes manifest as the years pass. He himself is the subject of this working. Such intelligence and power as belong to personality alone account for this external unifying, purposive force presiding over and controlling his destiny.

283. (4) We have already seen in a previous chapter that Christ constantly offered himself as the object of religious faith to men. Let us briefly review his own claim and the terms in which he defines religious experience. (1) His claim is to the allegiance of all men to himself as the Revealer of God. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden . . . Take my yoke upon you and learn of me" (Matt. xi. 29, 30). He proclaims himself as the future judge of men (Matt. xxv. 31-46). "Follow me" was his constant invitation and command (Matt. xix. 21). (2) Christ defined religious experience in terms of himself. (a) Its *condition* was *faith* in him. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life" (John iii. 36; Matt. xviii. 5, 6). (b) Christ was the inner structural law of experience. Conformity to his image summed it up. "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will and it shall be done unto you" (John xv. 7). This is echoed in Paul's experience: "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. i. 21). (c) Christ is the organic social law of Christianity. A religous

society, the church, is to find its bond of unity in him. Personal faith in him was the condition of membership in it. After Peter's confession of faith he said: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. xvi. 18). (d) In the historical development of Christianity, amid opposition, Christ was its source of triumph. "In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John xvi. 33). (e) He is also its law and life in its gradual development and ultimate triumph (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). We might indefinitely multiply proof texts in support of these points, but it is unnecessary.

284. (5) Now we have in Christ the complete answer to the personal craving which runs through religious experience. He makes visible the unseen God, and meets the heart of man in its yearning for forgiveness, fellowship, power and redemption. He explains personality and interprets it for man on the human and divine side, showing man's likeness to God and his immortality. How, then, does the adjustment with the higher powers work practically when it is mediated through Christ? The answer is that the most definite and satisfying response comes thus and only thus. The answer of the soul to Christ is the same as the answer of the soul to God. He acts upon the soul as God and produces the proper effect in it of God's action. "The Christian submits himself to God in Christ and then something wonderful occurs. His trust is not met by silence, vacancy

and irresponsiveness, plunging him into the despair of those who worshipped the dumb idols of heathenism; but to his humble submission a truly divine answer is given. From Christ he actually receives those gifts which he refers and must refer to God, the forgiveness of his sins and the sanctification of his soul."[2]

285. To the man thus yielding himself to Christ there are certain things which are known directly as we know all things of which we ourselves are conscious. For one thing he knows that Christ furnished the motives and incentives to his action. Christ also furnished the aim and ideal which he pursues. He knows moreover that what has occurred within him was not a form of mental exercise merely, but a transaction between persons. The repulsion which he first felt and the attraction which followed were both personal. The simplest man who thinks at all knows the difference, in the effect produced upon him, between an idea and a person. They are diverse kinds of experience, which should not be confounded. If, therefore, in the exercise of repentance and faith a face answers my face, a heart responds to my heart, and I am acted on from without in personal ways, I have, for me at least, irrefutable evidence of the objective existence of the Person so moving me. When to this personal experience I add that of tens of thousands of living Christians, and an unbroken line of them back to Christ, and when I find in the New Testament a manifold record of like experiences, together with a clear account of the origin and cause

of them all, my certainty becomes absolute. One of the most urgent of all duties resting upon modern Christians is to assert with clearness and vigor the certainties of Christian experience. The relaxed strings of the harp of faith, due to agnostic and other influences, can only thus be keyed once more to concert pitch and Christianity again assert its proper power in the world.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE VERIFICATION OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

286. In scientific research verification is the process by which a conclusion reached or a hypothesis formed is confirmed by additional facts, experiments or arguments. "Verification is not a distinct mode of proof, but is simply a confirmation of one proof by another, sometimes of a deduction by an induction, sometimes of an induction by a deduction, and, finally, sometimes of one induction or deduction by another."[1] The proof for a conclusion may be convincing without verification. Where it can be employed, however, verification often strengthens a position greatly.

Verification, of course, conforms to the nature of the subject under investigation. Social and political science cannot employ the methods of verification available for physical science. The data of those sciences cannot be measured and weighed by yard-sticks and scales, or placed in exhausted receivers, or subjected to the action of chemical forces. So in religious experience verification must of necessity conform to the nature of the subject.

The conclusion at which we have arrived is that the religious experience known as the new birth is the

product of supernatural forces; that these forces are personal; that Jesus Christ as the Revealer of God to men actually works the change within man's nature; and that the inner power and witness which he employs for this purpose is the Holy Spirit of God. It is now proposed to indicate how this conclusion is verified, or how the initial experience of the Christian is confirmed. This confirmation will in large measure consist of further experiences, rich and manifold in character. We shall still move in the realm of facts and things and not merely in the realm of thoughts and arguments. It will be noted also that the verification will not apply equally in every instance to all parts of Christian experience. Sometimes the confirmation will refer to the new birth itself, at others to the divine forces which produce it, and sometimes to all these aspects together.

287. (1) In the first place, then, let us note the verification of Christian experience through the principle of *contrast*. Contrast is a fundamental law of knowledge. It is change from one state of consciousness to another which enables us to know. Professor John Fiske writes: "It is an undeniable fact that we cannot know anything whatever except as contrasted with something else. The contrast may be bold or sharp, or it may dwindle into a slight discrimination, but it must be there. . . . It is not a superficial but a fundamental truth that if there were no color but red it would be exactly the same thing as if there were no color at all. . . . If our ears were to be

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filled with one monotonous roar of Niagara, unbroken by alien sounds, the effect upon consciousness would be absolute silence."[2] We are not obliged to adopt Mr. Fiske's theory of evil which he develops from this principle of contrast, but the principle itself may be applied to the verification of the evidence of Christian experience.

Now in conversion one of the most radical and striking contrasts is introduced into experience. It is unnecessary to attempt to state exhaustively the contents of the experience. But some of them we name. The total past life with its moral direction is contrasted with the present with its opposite direction. It includes a contrast of present love for God and men with a past indifference or even hate; a past disturbed and burdened conscience with a present sense of relief, peace and joy; a past sense of bondage with a present sense of freedom; a past sense of weakness with a present sense of power. Of course, the ideal is not yet realized, but there is a contrast of the carnal with the spiritual natures. There is a sharp inner struggle between them. It is not a new personality which has taken the place of the old, but the center of the life has been shifted so completely that it is in a new kingdom altogether. The whole nature, intellect, conscience, feelings and will share this sense of contrast. Old things are passed away, all things have become new. This was Paul's way of stating the experience. Individuality, of course, determines the points where the contrasts are sharpest. Children

converts and converts who were gradually prepared for the change feel the contrasts just as others do, though with varying degrees of intensity. For the opposing principle of evil works all about them in society and they react against it there as well as within.

This contrast in experience is not an instance of those experiences where "extremes meet," as we say, where one emotional state is followed quickly by its opposite through nervous reaction. Nor is it an instance of contrast between merely natural growth from a lower to a higher stage. Because the believer is himself familiar with all these forms of contrast. He has had experience of them all, and he knows his religious experience is unique. The life prior to conversion had no seeds or germs which unaided could have produced the result by natural growth. Sometimes, indeed, at that time he committed himself to a higher moral ideal in his own strength, but failed. His utter inability to attain the moral and spiritual plane which he now exultantly occupies was as much a matter of past consciousness with him as any experience of his life. Frank says, speaking of this change, that the Christian "who has experienced regeneration and conversion is absolutely and without exception conscious that it is the opposite of natural development; and if before his conversion he may have supposed himself capable of effecting this transformation, yet as soon as conversion takes place the fact is present to his consciousness, that the result has neither pro-

ceeded from him nor could do so."[3] These statements are substantially true, whether all converts, *without exception,* are able to give so rational an account of experience at first or not. The evidential value of this experience of contrast, being rooted in a fundamental law of knowledge, is very great. It is great as to the change itself. The pre- and post-conversion states are so sharply distinguished at every point that no shadow of doubt is felt as to the reality of the change. It is also convincing as to the cause. For the absence before and the presence after regeneration of a new spiritual causal agency at work in the soul is no less marked a contrast.

288. (2) Observe next that Christian experience is verified through reflection. Christian mysticism differs from all other forms of mysticism in this chiefly, that it can give an intelligible account of itself. The peril of mysticism usually is its vagueness, its tendency to slip its tether and soar into the realm of cloudland. Christian mysticism is solidly based on facts rationally grasped and reduced to an ordered system. Vindicating himself from the charge of fanaticism, the apostle Paul distinctly repudiated the charge that he was living a merely emotional life of alleged communion with the unknown world of spirit. "Because we thus judge that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 14, 15). The point of his plea was that

he was not "beside himself," but his life was based on a judgment, which itself in turn was grounded in historical facts, and facts of experience.

289. A few points only can be suggested at which reflection verifies Christian experience, clarifies and confirms it. The first to be named is that it makes reasonable the idea of the forgiveness of sin. There is no fact recorded in all the history of Christian experience more undeniable than the conviction for sin, including a sense of self-condemnation and rejection by God. Under the lash of conscience thousands have been plunged in despair. To them it seemed incredible that God could forgive. His holy character over against their guilt left an impassable gulf between. The atonement wrought by Christ has been the only source of relief, and thousands have entered into peace through that "finished work." We need not here discuss the nature of the atonement. The fact of experience is all we need to urge, and that fact is that forgiveness is made reasonable only by the atonement of Christ. The further remarkable fact is to be noted that after Christ's death Judaism ceased to offer animal sacrifices, and wherever Christianity went these sacrifices ceased. Buddhism, the one great religion without animal sacrifices, is also without any proper sense of sin. Christianity has marvelously deepened the sense of sin and at the same time abolished sacrifices of the propitiatory kind.[4]

290. *Assurance* is another phase of Christian ex-

perience which illustrates verification through reflection. This is closely related to the preceding point. Christian assurance of the sane and biblical type is a rational rather than an emotional phase of experience. Doubts, misgivings, and fears, which so frequently haunt the early stages of Christian experience, are usually due to a failure to grasp the nature of the spiritual transaction through which the soul has passed. Christ is known, but the method of removing guilt, the completeness of the divine pardon, the breadth and depth of divine love, are not understood. The Christian realities are present, but they are obscure; a fog surrounds them. As they become clear and all becomes reasonable and orderly, the earlier experience passes into a distinct stage, accompanied by deepening conviction and growing intensity of faith. The fact-side and the thought-side of early experience thus join hands and create a double certainty. Sometimes, indeed, the thought-side of conversion is clearly grasped before conversion, but always remains unfruitful until the fact-side enters experience through the surrender of the will. In this case experience verifies thought, and assurance marks the beginning of the Christian life.

291. Reflection also inevitably affects the Christian's view as to the creative cause of experience, the Person of Christ. Knowing that the initial act of the soul was trust in Christ, and knowing that the results produced within and progressively realized are divine, he cannot fail to form an estimate of the

Christ who thus works within himself and in others around him. The type of theology which denies the necessity of facing the question as to Christ's Person is impossible to Christian experience. It will not do to assert simply that Christ has for us the value of God and let the matter rest. Whether or not he be mere man is not a question which experience can evade. The mind simply refuses to stop at this point. He who has for man the value of God, and works in man and society the works of God, cannot be on the same level with man. Christ is crowned thus Lord of all by the soul which has known his power in redemption. The moral and spiritual fruits of Christ's power are so manifold that the inner world of experience is gradually seen to be a system within itself, a spiritual cosmos, like external nature, with Christ as the center. It is an orderly series of effects which have their necessary and corresponding causes. The Kingdom of the Spirit thus comes into view. Law reigns in this realm as well as elsewhere. The church is understood as the creation of his hand and the embodiment of his ideal.

The logic of Athanasius and his friends in the great controversy in the early centuries is thus appreciated. The new spiritual fabric rising above that ancient civilization is seen to be a divine product, and yet bearing Christ's image in every part. No view of his person which made him less than divine was adequate; because no cause less than divine was equal to the effect. The view passes also once more

to the New Testament and finds not the rational view of Christ only but the experimental. In those early writings again the fact-side and thought-side of faith unite and give us the same result. Verification through reflection thus brings us to a consistent and unified system of truths, which is the only adequate explanation of the facts lying at the basis of experience.

292. (3) It is in order next to consider the verification of Christian experience in practical life. In determining the reality or genuineness of a precious stone, a variety of tests might be applied. It might be tested by weight or by its degree of hardness, or its size, or shape, or its quality when under the edge of the cutting instrument, or its reflective beauty in the sunlight. Confidence would grow with a ratio in accord with the progressive and successful application of these tests. So with Christian experience. Now, we may assert that Christian experience with its meanings as previously outlined is the working theory of practical life. One of the most conclusive of all tests is its workableness. The nature of the case prevents more than a brief presentation of this phase of our subject.

293. (a) For one thing we must repeat what has frequently been implied or declared before. Christian experience actually raises to a higher plane of moral power and attainment. An instance of the most practical kind is in point. A redeemed drunkard, with vivid memory of past hopeless struggles and

new sense of power through Christ, was replying to the charge that "his religion was a delusion." He said: "Thank God for the delusion; it has put clothes on my children and shoes on their feet and bread in their mouths. It has made a man of me and it has put joy and peace in my home, which had been a hell. If this is a delusion, may God send it to the slaves of drink everywhere, for their slavery is an awful reality."

294. (b) Again, Christian experience enables its subject to rise above the ills of life. This is an intensely practical test. I do not here dwell upon the heroic aspects of Christian endurance amid persecution, though these are as striking and convincing in modern life as at any past period. Witness the instances among native Christians during the recent Boxer uprising in China. Nor do I dwell especially upon the Christian theory of evil. This is important and is within itself of great interest. I refer rather to the practical uses and endurance of evil by Christian men and women. It is a fact which cannot be gainsaid that thousands of the humblest believers in Christ are the most heroic endurers of suffering. Sorrow, loss, pain, when working normally with irreligious men, produce either a stoic temper or tend to destroy character altogether. Yet among the most beautiful and buoyant and joyous lives on earth to-day are those of men and women who are incessant sufferers. "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience approvedness, and approvedness hope, and

hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us" (Romans v. 3-5). Tribulation thus ceases to be a consumer in the ethical realm and becomes a producer. Thus also the pessimistic theory that suffering is a reaping of the seeds of sin sown in the past is transformed into the view that suffering is itself a sowing, the glorious harvest of which is reaped in time and eternity. Surely, as a working theory of life this is a strong point in favor of Christian experience.

295. (c) In practical life again the believer's experience is known as *effect* and afterwards as *cause*. It is an effect produced in him by divine forces at conversion. Reducing redemption to a formula, we might put it thus: $a + b = c$. Let a stand for the efficient cause, Christ; b for the condition, repentance and faith, and c for the result, regeneration. Now b and c, two out of the three elements of the formula, are known to the Christian in consciousness, as experiences within his own soul. They are the most indubitable of facts for him. He knows, also, that a, the efficient cause, was Jesus Christ, although he knows this indirectly through the result produced within. Now, having been renewed himself, he becomes a propagator of the faith. He adopts the formula as the working theory of Christian propagandism. He becomes the channel through which the efficient cause a acts upon others. He finds that he can now produce, as secondary cause, the result

before produced in him. The remarkable fact appears that when the factor *a* is omitted the result does not follow. Christianity with Christ left out is unworkable.

296. (d) Consider next the verification of Christian experience by means of prayer. Here our concern is with the practical side of prayer rather than the theoretical. Prayer, of course, presupposes Theism, or the existence of a personal God, and man's capacity for communion with him. We need only presuppose, also, that the world was planned in the interest of personal beings rather than in the interest of mechanical nature below the personal, in order to discover the utility and possibility of prayer. Answers to prayer were prearranged in the making of the world, and by its very constitution. The wonder is not that prayer is ever answered, but that man so neglects to claim his heritage and ask for what all nature labors to bring to him.

Now, practical experience in prayer when persisted in uniformly brings two very definite convictions. One is the conviction just pointed out that the make of the world admits of answer to prayer. The other is of the reality of personal intercourse with God. The assurance grows steadily that "spirit with spirit can meet." Again, we must insist that this assurance is not of the nature of logical assurance, or conviction based on a process of reasoning or inference. It is distinctly diverse in its nature from such conviction. Personal fellowship with God becomes

a unique experience. It is repeated frequently and thus confirmed. It is as definite and convincing as convictions arising from our actions and reactions upon physical objects. We have not exhaustive knowledge of these, but very real knowledge. This knowledge of God is as direct as our knowledge of our fellowmen, whose real essence we do not behold, yet whom we know through results produced in us by physical and intellectual and moral means.

In all the above and other ways practical life confirms Christian experience, and it is found that the Christian view of the causes at work in regeneration is the only adequate and satisfying view of the causes which preside over his whole earthly course.

297. (4) We note in the next place the verification of Christian experience by the experience of other Christians. There is a private element in the experience of each individual. No two personal fellowships are ever exactly alike. So to each believer a "white stone" is given with a new name written thereon, which no one knoweth but he to whom it is given (Rev. ii. 17). But the individual experience does not stand alone. Its essentials are repeated in communities, in churches, in periods of time, and through Christian ages. It is thus that experience is saved from the charge of being individual and subjective merely. It thus becomes an order of facts in the religious sphere. It thus comes under the operation of law. Thus, also, it challenges and merits the attention of the scientific observer.

298. (5) Again, Christian experience is verified by comparison with the earliest literature of the distinctively Christian experience, the New Testament. It should be remarked here that when we employ the Scriptures to confirm Christian experience we may safely ignore critical questions. For, as a record of religious experience, the witness of the Scripture is valid independently of the questions of date, authorship or composition. The theology of experience, indeed, is achieving a remarkable double form of independence in the religious realm. It is achieving first an independece for experience itself. He who has known Christ's power in his own life is convinced whatever may be true as to date and authorship of the books of the Bible. It is also achieving an independence for Scripture. Experience goes behind criticism and pronounces the Scripture true because it conforms to the spiritual facts of to-day. John's Gospel stands because of the decree of this court of experience, though it has been established also on critical grounds. In the clear atmosphere of experience critical theories cease from troubling and doubting souls are at rest.

Now this New Testament literature bears a most remarkable relation to modern Christian experience. First of all it agrees with modern experience in its psychical and spiritual contents. The same causes and the same conditions produce the same effects. Regeneration, the moral renewal, or the new birth, follows directly or is accompanied by the same atti-

tude of the soul. Jesus Christ himself as the object of faith bears the same vital and organic relation to the whole moral change and to the general production of the ethical result in character and society.

The New Testament literature is the record, also, of the historical causes which account for the individual experience and the common experience of the Christian society. In other words, the New Testament actually presents to us the experience itself in closest conjunction with the creative forces. These have already been described in our account of Jesus Christ.

Again, modern experience is created, nourished and stimulated by the use of the New Testament literature. To act on the belief that that literature furnishes the key to religious experience uniformly results in a confirmation of the belief. Moreover, church history clearly teaches that every great revival in the history of Christianity has been the result of a return to or renewed interest in the literary sources of the Gospel.

299. (6) The next mode of verification is a continuation of the last, but merits separate treatment, viz., verification through the witness of the Holy Spirit. Under this head we confront the facts which furnish the trinitarian basis of Christian experience. It is not claimed that Christian experience alone proves the doctrine of the Trinity. Revelation and experience together yield a trinitarian result.

Here the first point to be considered is that Jesus

repeatedly made promise of the Holy Spirit (Luke xi. 13; John vii. 39). The Spirit was to speak not of himself but concerning Christ. He was to show disciples the things of Christ (John xiv. 26 ff.). Disciples were to wait for the promise of the Father (Acts i. 4). Pentecost was the fulfillment of the promise (Acts ii. 33 ff.).

After his coming, the total influence of the Spirit as recorded in the New Testament was, on its intellectual side, illumination as to the historic facts concerning Christ, or the communicating of new truth about him. On its moral side his work was to create in believers the moral and spiritual image of Christ. Both the conviction for sin, which was unbelief and the cure of sin, faith, were wrought by the Spirit in relation to Christ. Sin was lack of faith in him, salvation came of faith in him (John iii. 36; v. 40; xvi. 8 ff.). The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made men free from the law of sin and death (Rom. viii. 2). If a man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his (Rom. viii. 9). If Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness (Rom. viii. 10). Again, if Christ's Spirit dwells in the believer, then he that raised Christ from the dead "shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his spirit, which dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11). The entire process of sanctification is to culminate in the believer's being "conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. viii. 29). In the same context the sense of the Fatherhood of

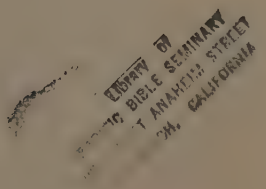
God is set forth as the result of the indwelling of the Spirit. They are sons of God who are led by the Spirit of God. Through him comes the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry "Abba Father" (Rom. viii. 15).

Space forbids further unfolding of this thought. All the epistles of the New Testament agree in thus describing the work of the Holy Spirit. The teachings may be summarized thus: The operation of the Holy Spirit was according to spiritual law, that is, it was uniform. The progress, the end, and the limits of that law were determined by the Person and work of Christ. The effect of the Spirit's work on the soul was like that of a royal signet on wax. The Spirit applied the seal, but the impress which remained was of one face alone, that of Christ.[5] As every ray of sunlight can be traced directly to the sun, so every ray of the Spirit's light in the soul can be traced to Christ as the Revealer of God.

Now, in modern Christian experience the above result is exactly reproduced. This truth may be generalized thus: The *line of least resistance* in spiritual growth is found to be in the direction of Christ's moral image. The indwelling Spirit creates and interprets that image in the believer's inner life. Other ideals, other modes of realizing righteousness, result in friction, resistance, disappointment. This is no easy or sudden attainment; but experience, that is to say experiment, brings to the believer not the logical demonstration of the syllogism, nor the mathe-

matical demonstration of the theorem, but the practical "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. ii. 4).

300. In conclusion, it remains to remark that all the methods of the verification of Christian experience are progressive. Each reinforces the other. The cumulative effect of them all produces immovable conviction. The gross result in moral and spiritual attainment is itself the solid basis of outward fact, which fortifies us against any imputation of self-deception. The inner basis of fact is our own experience of spiritual realities operating as causes. There is a mysterious, an unexplained side of these inner realities. But the result is as tangible and real to us as that of a tree whose growth we observe while every particle of material addition to it is as mysterious as life itself.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CHAPTER XX.

THE RELATION OF JESUS CHRIST TO RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

We say the relation of Jesus Christ to *religious* experience. For if he is actually the Creator of *Christian* experience through personal living action in the souls of men, then other religious experiences, if genuine, are to be classed in one way or another as varieties or imperfect forms of this. In short, if he is God no rival can be supposed. He is "the true light, even the light which lighteth every man coming into the world" (John i. 9).

301. We are now to consider Christ's relation to experience from the point of view of objections, or rather of proposed substitutes. In several ways now current substitutes are proposed for the divine, living, personal and spiritually creative Christ. Recognizing that the name of Christ is woven into the very texture of religious experience, men seek in a variety of ways to show that the name is all that is necessary; that the conception of a living personal Christ may be dropped altogether from the formula of religious experience. A hasty glance at the alternative explanations of religious experience is all that our present limits will admit. From these we shall pass to

an attempt to show that none of them is true or possible. Three of these only we name as sufficiently inclusive and representative: The idealistic Christ, the Ritschlian Christ, and the Christ of modern Psychology.

302. The idealistic Christ arises out of the Gospels. The actual history may be unknown, it is urged. The real Jesus may have been a sinner. So long, however, as we obtain a workable moral ideal from the record by imaginative addition or otherwise we have all that is necessary. Tolstoy and some of the destructive critics of the New Testament, who, in some sense, wish to be called Christians, hold this view. Modern idealistic philosophy, which minimizes the history and magnifies the religious ideas of Christ, encourages a similar view. But in reply we must urge that while ideals have their noble uses, they do not and cannot serve the ends of the Gospel. The idea of the Gospel, *dying to live,* self denial, and love in the deepest sense, is foreign to human nature before regeneration. To be *at home* with the ideal man's will and affections must be raised to the plane of the ideal itself. Ideals conceived in and emanating from human brains can by no magic be transmuted into redemptive forces. The history of ideals, Greek and Roman and of other kinds, compared with that of Christianity, shows this. The Gospel is not an ideal merely, but *power.*[1]

303. There is also the Christ of Albrecht Ritschl and his school, which has been mentioned in a pre-

vious chapter. We do not know that Christ is God but only that he has *for us* the value of God. He does not act directly upon our hearts, but only indirectly through the written records of his word in the Gospel. But Christian experience replies promptly that it knows better. It knows that what it has felt and responded to is not merely the after effects of a dead man's teachings. It knows Christ as alive. Christ as beautiful example or as matchless teacher yonder and apart from me is as distinct from the Christ within as the stream that flows on a painter's canvas is distinct from the water that slakes my thirst.

304. Then there is the Christ of recent psychology. That is, Christ is one of the many possible explanations of Christian experience. The principle of parsimony, which warns us not to multiply causes, is rigidly applied here. There is a power from above which regenerates man, it is urged. But we do not know and, it may be, cannot know what it is. We must think of it in the lowest possible terms. It is an Oversoul, or impersonal abstract principle, perhaps.[2] Professor James quotes with approval even the following: "The influence of the Holy Spirit, exquisitely called the Comforter, is a matter of actual experience, as solid a reality as that of electro-magnetism."[3] But to assert anything definite about this supernatural power which enters the soul is, Professor James contends, simply to adopt an *overbelief*.[4] The Buddhist calls it one thing, the pantheist gives his

answer and so on to the end. The Christian says it is God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, but there is no proof of this. It is merely his overbelief.

Now we admire the empirical scientist who is jealous of his principle of rigid adherence to facts. His steadfast refusal to accept unfounded conclusions is wholly admirable. But he overreaches himself when he concludes that Christ's presence in Christian experience is merely an overbelief. In a sense, of course, every opinion relating to the unseen world is an "overbelief." The existence of the soul itself is such an overbelief. Yet consciousness and will are hopeless problems to scientific psychologists save on the "theory" that there is a soul which lies behind, and unifies experience. So also belief in electricity, or the force of gravitation, or the vital principle in plants and animals are such "overbeliefs." Yet science is guilty of no such timidity in asserting the existence of these realities and ascribing to them such qualities as make them distinct forms of existence. The principle of parsimony here does not seem to inspire such caution as in the religious sphere where the most barren of abstractions is all that the evidence is allowed to yield.

Besides, it would seem strange that if the Oversoul is capable of meeting personal wants so completely it might not, without undue violence, be regarded as personal. Then, too, it seems incredible that going so far it goes no farther. If it produces "lyric enchantment," and acts as a new "gift of life," and "inspires

love," as Professor James asserts, it surely will not mock man's craving for certainty by withholding further light. Conceive it if you can, a Regenerating *Power,* which remains forever *dumb!* Without a communicable idea or a voice, yet with power to lift man to a new moral level; creating in him a passionate longing to know, but hiding in the eternal depths of silence. The "practical reason" of the Christian believer makes short shrift of such a nebulous conception of the "higher powers." Surely here Occam's razor, as the principle of parsimony has been called, has been ground to an edge so fine that it refuses to penetrate the flimsiest substance, but rather turns and becomes blunted thereby.

It may be said as to all the proposed substitutes for Christ in experience that they are merely tentative theories and not established conclusions. Their advocates are as the man not who taketh off but as the man who buckleth on the sword. They are without historic background. So far as they have such background it is against their credibility as we shall soon see.

305. Coming now to the main question: Apart from the analysis of Christian experience itself and its evidence for the man in whom it takes place, are there grounds which ought to be convincing to the other man who stands outside that experience? Whether it *will* be convincing or not is another question, depending on a man's moral attitude towards the Christian view of life, his interest in the religious

"option." To employ Professor James' phraseology, this option may be to him "dead," "avoidable" or "trivial;" it can never be "forced." To every man it ought to be "living" and "momentous."[5] To all such there is abundant evidence to satisfy; to warrant the reason in setting the seal of its approval upon the Christian venture of faith.

306. First of all we must be profoundly impressed with the testimony of the multitude of witnesses to Christian experience, a multitude to-day which no man can number of merchants, and poets, of engineers and artists, of mechanics and scholars, of scientists, philosophers and statesmen. Many of them are trained experts in scientific and philosophic research. Professor Romanes was impressed with the number of Christian believers in the faculty of Cambridge University.[6] The witness borne by these men in hundreds of cases is critical and reflective in character. It is not merely an unreflecting but a reasoned testimony. It is a witness borne also in many instances under the constant fire of skepticism, and in an intellectual climate in great measure created by Agnosticism. Frequently, also, it is a witness born of a twofold experience, of unbelief first and of faith afterwards. The facts to which the testimony is borne lie in the one realm of absolute certainty, consciousness itself. Now, how does this testimony relate Christ to Christian experience? It says that Christ is related to it in so vital and organic a manner that if he be left out it falls in

ruins. Both its form and its substance owe their origin and existence to him as living personal Agent and Cause. Such testimony merits the highest consideration. Against it the theories formed by men, no more capable in any way and far less capable as not knowing the experience themselves, cannot stand for a moment. The testimony, indeed, is an irrefutable "consensus of the competent," equal to any conclusion ever established by consensus of scientific opinion.

307. But the testimony of living witnesses is reinforced by Christian history. Creeds are the monumental expression of religious conviction. If the reader will turn through the pages of Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom* and study these crystallizations of experience and thought during two thousand years of Christian history he will discover that Christ is not merely incidental, but fundamental in them all. They would wither and die like trees around which the bark has been cut were the doctrine of Christ's Person removed from them. The salvation which he reveals and accomplishes in and for men is the vertebral column of all the great creeds. This is their *raison d'etre.* They grow dumb in attempting to justify their own existence when robbed of this plea.

Again, Jesus Christ has been the center of the progressive moral and spiritual movement of the world two thousand years. The Athanasian controversy was over the question of his divine nature.

The issue between Pelagius and Augustine referred to the nature of man and the nature of the salvation Christ brings. The Reformation was a return to justification by faith in Christ, a restoration of his supreme priesthood against the claims of an ecclesiastical priesthood. The Puritan Revolution had at its core the same great principle, the direct relation of the soul to God as revealed through Christ. This means that Christ is the vital principle of Christian progress. There is no other key to the upward movement.

Christian art and architecture bear the same witness. The great paintings and the great cathedrals bear record to the manner in which his cross or his resurrection and ascension held sway in the Christian consciousness of the ages. Baptism and the Lord's Supper have no meaning apart from him. These simple yet striking witnesses are the external and visible symbols of inward realities. The "real presence" in the Lord's Supper is not a "fact in the realm of matter," but it is inexplicable save as it represents a fact in the realm of the spirit. The very crudeness of the view that the bread and wine are his flesh and blood accentuates the vividness and intensity of the belief that Jesus Christ was not a dead man on whose grave the Syrian stars looked down, but the real presence behind the Christian movement.

The experiential, the doctrinal, the historical, the artistic, the ceremonial and ecclesiastical lines of con-

tinuity all run straight back to his Person. That Person was the one unifying bond in all the controversies and variations of Christendom. The whole movement is meaningless without him. As one has said: "We may not omit one of the nineteen centuries which bind the present as by a golden chain to the life of the carpenter."[7]

308. When we examine the New Testament itself we find that he is still the only clew to its significance. All that marvelous ethical beauty and spiritual power stream as a radiance from this Person. "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord" (Col. iii. 20). "Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. v. 25). So the command to wives, husbands, fathers, children, servants, are all enforced by the one supreme motive. "Ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. iii. 24). He is the vital core of New Testament ethics.

These words of disciples are in accord with those of Christ himself. We have repeatedly shown that Christ constantly offered himself to mankind as the object of their religious devotion. According to disciples and according to his own word, then, Christ was the medium through which life was to flow from God to men. He was the mould into which religious experience was to be cast. The human consciousness in its religious strivings and spiritual activities was to move around him. He was to be its great structural Idea and Law. We have already seen

how history has vindicated his claim. There have been degenerations, of course, departures and variations in many forms. But this type of experience has survived through them all and to-day exists in fresh vigor in thousands of lives in its original beauty and power. The form of the product two thousand years after the creation of the mould exactly fits the mould.

309. We may arrive at the same conclusion by another route. We may test the matter by the method of propagating Christianity. How can the Christian results be produced in experience? Evangelism will shed light upon the answer to the question. Christian evangelism means the following: (a) The winning of men to the religious life by preaching. (b) The preaching of a set of truths, all of which are connected with Christ. The motives and appeals of successful evangelism Christ supplies, and the end in view is always faith in him. (c) The production of immediate results in the conversion of men. (d) The permanence of the moral results thus attained is the test of the reality of the moral transformation effected in conversion. Now it is a fact, beyond question, that from Pentecost to the present moment the evangelistic apparatus of Christianity has worked successfully. Not only so. The striking fact in all that evangelism has been that where the idea of personal relation to Christ as Lord and Redeemer has been omitted from it evangelism has failed. The moral transformation does not take

place. Christian history is rich in material to sustain this point, that the personal Christ is the heart of successful Christian evangelism. Harnack, in his recent history of early Christian missions, in Book III., chapter 3, gives this as a characteristic mark of the evangelism of the early centuries.[8] Indeed, Harnack constantly shows in various ways in this book that the preaching of the personal Christ was the heart of the power of early evangelism.

So of other writers. Forms of Christianity which ceased to preach Christ began to wane. The early Socinian movement is an example. Roman Catholic missionaries prior to the Reformation usually preached a Gospel vitalized by this supreme element, the need of faith in Christ as Savior from sin. After the Reformation, Jesuit missionaries in many instances preached an ecclesiasticism instead of Christ, as, for example, in Africa and China. Very little trace of that early work can be found there to-day.

310. Note, now, the argument. Evangelism with a given element always produces a given result. Evangelism without that element always fails. Where Christ is preached as the object of faith and Producer of Christian experience, men are regenerated. Where this element is omitted men are left helpless. It is a proof based on what is known in inductive logic as the method of "concomitant variations." Where one phenomenon always varies with the variation of another the two are causally connected. If the mercury in the thermometer uniformly rises as the sur-

rounding temperature rises, and falls as it falls, the two are connected as cause and effect. In Christian evangelism men rise in the scale of moral being in proportion as the heat and power of the personal Christ is brought to bear upon them.

311. Now suppose we concede for the moment that in its essence conversion is simply the permanent choice of duty as such, apart from Christ, or that it is the beginning of communion with the Oversoul, or the eternal world of spirit, or the higher powers, how comes it that every evangelism which leaves out the Person of Christ fails, however much it may insist on duty as such, or upon the need of communion with God? Who is this Christ that he should thus dominate the race and project himself into its moral struggles? Fairbairn says there are two ways of getting rid of Christ. One is by critical analysis, which seeks to destroy the claim of the literary records, the Gospels and epistles of the New Testament. The other is by a dialectical analysis, which undermines confidence in the dogmatic decisions of the early Christian centuries by showing the absurdity of the attempts to define him as a divine being. But when both these processes have been completed there stands Christ in his unique place as the Lord of Christian history.[9] Analysis cannot touch him as the great insistent fact of the Christian consciousness, as real to-day as in Paul's day. No other religious teacher ever claimed or

attained a place so unique and personal in the inner experience of his disciples as Jesus.

312. Now, the success which attends the preaching of this Christian norm or experimental ideal in evangelism can be rationally accounted for. A divine Person, who reveals the true religious ideal of the race and who has power to impart the moral energy necessary to realize the ideal—this is the explanation. If you were to reason *a posteriori,* from the effect back to the cause, you would be compelled to reach a conclusion which would involve the elements of the Christian view or explanation of the case. The effects match the cause, and the cause raises the expectations realized in the effects. One of the anecdotes which used to be current about the boy George Washington was that which related to his surprise when one morning he found his name spelled out by the growing plants in a garden bed. To the untutored mind of the boy it might have seemed as if magic had been at work, but the phenomenon was simple enough when explained by the father. For the forces necessary to produce the result were easily controlled to that end. Now, if Washington had predicted that for two thousand years afterwards that same name should appear in the garden beds of mankind, and have coupled with this prediction another, viz., that the presence of that name in clear outline in any garden would alone keep the other beds therein free from noxious weeds; and if this prediction had been fulfilled, the conclusion

would be inevitable that Washington in some way controlled the secret forces of nature, was in alliance with the cosmos, and that in a manner above all ordinary human forms of such power. But Jesus Christ has done a far greater thing. He is writing his name spiritually upon thousands of lives to-day, and that name alone has succeeded in keeping man's spiritual garden clean.

Here, then, are definite effects in religious experience and character, of the highest moral excellence, definitely associated with the name and power of Christ. They cannot be explained by a wholly indefinite cause. The Christian hypothesis allows for all these facts; others fall far short of an explanation.

313. The Christian norm of experience not only gives a rational account of itself, but it can rationally account for the failure of other forms of religious evangelism. The latter fail of equal results because they do not have either an ideal as high or a power whereby its ideal can be realized. It is the union of both elements which constitutes the final test. The power at work in Christian experience succeeds so well as compared with other forms of religious experience, first, because it is personal and divine, and, second, because it connects itself in a manner so rational with all that is strongest and highest in man's nature. Compared with Buddhism, for example, the Christian ideal has all the strength of optimism as compared with pessimism. The Buddhist

ideal is extinction of personal life. It is directly against all normal instincts in man in its encouragement of the love of non-being. Christianity fosters the love of being and the most definite hope of individual life after death. The resurrection of the Author of the experience is its firm guarantee on this point. The arrested development of the life and civilization of the peoples where the Buddha has had sway, in contrast with the expansive life of Christian civilization which we see to-day, is not surprising in view of the causes at work.

314. Again, the strength of the Christian type of experience as compared with others is the strength of intellectual confidence as compared with the weakness of doubt. The psychic results of this temper of confidence appear in evangelism, as above shown. They also appear in history in its aggressive energy, in its progressive ascendency through the centuries, and also in the fact that no rival system of philosophic or religious thought has appeared which has succeeded long in disputing its ascendency. They have all had to make terms with it finally, in some form or other. This confidence has increased with the passing centuries. The individual believer of to-day is backed in his clear note of conviction by a line of confessors running back to the first disciples. The vagueness of the reference of religious experience merely to the "higher powers," indefinite and impersonal, whether law, or force, or many gods, has long ago been tried and found wanting. The Greek

philosophers reached that stage and came almost to despair, expressing the hope that some one would come with a "sure word" from the "higher powers."

315. The above considerations lead to this further statement, viz., that Jesus Christ, as the religious norm or mould of the race, has proven effective because the human consciousness has found in him the religious finality. He is, in this respect, like all the great insights and discoveries which men of genius have made from the beginning, although lifted far above them in other respects. Aristotle teaches the world logic to-day because in his development of the syllogism he conformed to the laws of thought and the eternal structure of man's mind. His work cannot be transcended for the reason that it involves principles as elemental and permanent as the constitution of the human mind itself. Syllogistic reasoning is based on rational ultimates. In like manner, the Christian norm of religious experience has won its position. It is final for all who have experimentally accepted it. To them it is inconceivable that it should ever be transcended. The reason is that it embraces every essential moral and religious fact known to religious experience. No moral excellence can be thought of which is not contained in it. It provides for the guilty conscience and rationalizes forgiveness in its doctrine of atonement. It provides for the renewal of the soul and the necessary moral dynamic in its doctrine of regeneration; and for its progressive development by conformity to the highest

moral ideal known to the race, Christ himself. It provides for communion and fellowship with the eternal world through Christ, the Revealer of the Father. This chief demand of other theories (communion with the higher powers) is more than met in the Christian view. Besides, this Christian norm works in practical life. All classes and conditions of men respond to it and are transformed by it.

316. As above outlined, the Christian norm of religious experience can be intellectually vindicated to the candid inquirer and student of experience. As a theory or scientific hypothesis it accounts for all the facts. But when it becomes personal experience and men feel its power, the certainty becomes absolute. We have already seen how it is the certainty of contrast with past conditions. This certainty is confirmed by successive stages in the growth of Christian experience. The progressive fitting in of details into the general ideal and plan of the life in Christ and trust in the Father adds to the strength of the certainty. Thought supplements feeling. The latter stages confirm and correct the earlier. The eccentricities are detected and allowance is made for them. The incidentals are seen in relation to the essentials of the Christian life. The common experience of other Christian believers with its uniform and consistent *rationale* contributes to the certainty. This is reinforced by the historic testimony of believers in the past. Finally, the present direct relation to the Personal living Christ, the Author of

the experience, finds explanation and confirmation at every point, in the New Testament records of early Christian experience, and these in turn rest directly upon the words of the historic Christ.

317. It is clear, therefore, that the attempt to eliminate Christ from Christian experience fails. Christian doctrine, Christian progress and Christian experience alike refuse to submit to the process. The facts stubbornly resist it. Seeking to discredit certain methods of finding evidences of design in nature a writer says: "If I should throw down a thousand beans at random upon a table, I could doubtless, by eliminating a sufficient number of them, leave the rest in almost any geometrical pattern you might propose to me, and you might then say that that pattern was the thing prefigured beforehand and that the other beans were mere irrelevance and packing material."[10] The same writer adds: "Our dealings with nature are just like this." That is, we manipulate the facts in order to produce our preconceived pattern.

Passing by this charge as to finding design in nature we remark that the reverse process is also possible. We may manipulate the beans so as to destroy a pattern already present. The pattern of Christ and his power are in New Testament facts, doctrinal facts, ecclesiastical and historical facts, and in experimental facts during two thousand years. To refuse to recognize and scientifically deal with this fact is simply to manipulate the beans to bring forth a preconceived result.

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PART IV.

THE EVIDENCE FROM CHRISTIAN HISTORY.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE TEST OF USEFULNESS: CHRISTIANITY A PERPETUAL INCENTIVE.

318. It is probable that if the average man of to-day were questioned on the subject he would declare that the best test of a religion is its usefulness. It is proposed now to apply this test to Christianity. The chief emphasis will be upon "usefulness" in the sense of workableness. It is assumed that Christianity is valuable in its moral ideals, that these are the highest and purest known to man. There is now, indeed, scarcely any controversy on this point. Men do not now deny that, *if practicable,* Christian morality is best. It is proposed rather to consider whether as a religious and moral movement Christianity has shown that it is practically workable.

Behind this inquiry will be the further question, whether its workableness is due to a divine power inherent in it or to natural causes. The latter of these questions has been answered, it is hoped in very large measure, in preceding chapters. We have now to view the action of Christianity in history. It will thus appear, it is believed, to be a divine force working towards a divine end.

The modern word which suggests the proposed method of regarding Christianity is the favorite one, success. Has Christianity succeeded, or has it failed? Does it contain the original Christian elements or has it been hopelessly corrupted? Is it adapted, as a religion, to meet all the needs of man? Is there prospect that it will be superseded? Will the energy by which it has wrought in earlier ages give way to some power greater than itself? These questions will occupy us in our remaining chapters.

First of all, what is a fair test of success? It is important that the principles on which our judgment is based be clearly grasped. A superficial view might easily conclude that Christianity is a failure. Society is still battling against evils of all kinds. Injustice, suffering, crime and war still afflict mankind grievously. The moral task of the race is far from complete, in spite of the fact that Christianity has been acting upon the world nearly two thousand years, to say nothing of the long prior history of Judaism.

The following statements may assist us in reaching the proper attitude for a sane judgment.

319. (1) The success of Christianity is relative to the opposition to be overcome, and it must be so judged. How many thousand years of evil did the new faith have to face! How deep seated and incurable seemed the moral disease of mankind when Christ came! The following language of Dean Milman is none too strong: "The conflict of Christianity with Judaism was a civil war, that with

Paganism the invasion and conquest of a foreign territory. In the former case it was the declared design of the innovation to perfect the established constitution on its primary principles; in the latter it contemplated the total subversion of the existing order of things, a reconstruction of the whole moral and religious being of mankind."[1] The total moral weight of the world with its deadly pull away from God must be overcome. The human heart and will were set as flint against it. Morally the planet had escaped from its orbit, and was plunging blindly through space. A power was required capable of bringing it back; yet a power acting with sufficient gentleness to avoid the ruin and chaos of a sudden reversal of movement; with sufficient persistence to pursue the orb to the limits of its wandering flight; and with moral and spiritual resources equal to the task of washing it clean of its sin and creating a regenerated society.

It is clear that none but a madman would demand that this work be done in a day. Nothing short of a force, both omnipotent and gentle, could ever hope to cope with the situation. In the nature of the case many weary centuries must elapse ere the end could be attained.

320. (2) Again, its success is relative to the programme proposed by Christianity itself. When we consider the words of its Founder it is clear that he contemplated no sudden revolution in the moral condition of mankind. This was not his method. It

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is true there were to be crises and quick onward movements; but for the most part the progress of the kingdom was to be gradual. Many of Christ's parables show this. The Kingdom of God is like leaven, which works silently and slowly; or it conforms to the growth of grain, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one are to grow together, like wheat and tares, until the end of the world. In the book of Revelation the battle between the opposing forces is dramatically set forth under many figures. Each victory is succeeded by a fresh conflict. Evil, subdued in one form, quickly assumes another. A beast, a false prophet, a wicked woman, a corrupt city, are some of the symbols of its varied manifestation. Only at the end of a long and weary struggle does the city of God appear coming down to earth out of heaven.

321. (3) In the next place the success of Christianity is relative to the spiritual laws which control its action upon men and society. Processes which are inward and vital are not so rapid as those which are mechanical. Every permanent moral and spiritual gain is purchased at great cost. To build a tree is not the same as to build a house. It requires a longer time. To build a man is a far more difficult process than to build a tree. Indeed, these processes are not described by the word "build," which suggests a mechanical process. They are growths, unfoldings from within. When the inner unfolding

becomes personal and involves the action of a will it is most difficult of all. When that will has been perverted by sin, warped and weakened at every point, its complete regeneration is necessarily painful and slow. The glory of Christianity is that it does not force the will. Men must choose for themselves in order to the highest moral attainment. Moral and spiritual sonship to God cannot be imposed upon an evil nature. The thing is impossible. It would not be sonship. Christianity, then, necessarily conforms to the action of man's nature—respects individuality, personality, freedom. Christ's supreme task, the most difficult of all tasks for deity itself, is to save man and yet leave him free. Hence the necessity of infinite patience on his part. Hence the "everlasting importunity" of his love.

Yet, men demand haste of Christ and his church and arraign them for lack of success, meaning by success quick returns which bulk large to the eye. They would destroy thus the essence of Christianity. They assume that it is a physical rather than a spiritual force; that man's nature is like a block of marble which can be shaped by tools applied externally, and that moral progress in history is as simple as laying such blocks upon each other in an external manner. These objectors would destroy the nature of Christianity as religion. It would cease to be a religion, if it ceased to be a personal relation between God and man, attended by free action on the part of both.

322. (4) Again, the success of Christianity is relative to the end to be accomplished. What is that end? The reply is, the kingdom of God, perfect men in a perfect society, wherein love has become the supreme law of action, to be realized on earth or in heaven or in both.

It is in the light of the above principles that we are to form our estimate of the success of Christianity. It is unfair to attempt to discredit it because it has not yet made the world over into the divine image. But there are tests, most severe, which it is fair to apply. It is entirely proper to ask has Christianity been faithful to its task? Has it persevered with the vagrant race? Has it made a good beginning of the work of regeneration? Has it exhibited capacity for coping with every form of opposition? Has it shown that it can meet the spiritual needs of all types of men? Has it been turned back by climate, or government, social or racial conditions? Has it encountered any force which gives promise of overthrowing it in the end? Has it made progress? Does it possess power of recovery from within, when turned back or defeated in its course? Now, two thousand years of Christian history furnish us with abundant answer to the above questions.

323. (1) For one thing we are profoundly impressed with the manner in which Christ has laid hold upon and moulded the world through personalities. Institutions have arisen on the Christian soil in large numbers, yet the real significance of the

movement is discerned best in its personalities. The apostle Paul, in an important sense, is the creator of modern Europe. Augustine with Clement and Origen in the early centuries, with Luther and Calvin in the later, have directed the course of Christian history in its purest and most central currents.

Dr. Geo. A. Gordon says: "Luther gave a new direction to the subsequent development of European life; he was the master of his age, and turned its best forces to fresh and momentous expression. To write the history of the Reformation and leave Luther out of the account is not possible. Granted that great ideas were concerned in the movement—still these ideas were centered in the strongest personality of the time, and through that dauntless manhood were wielded with elemental energy upon the imagination and heart of Europe."[2] This is Christ's method. He lays hold of men and through them changes the course of history. Dr. Fairbairn says with great truth that Christ has exhibited unparalleled power: "First, to change men, to make bad men good; secondly, an unparalleled power to make the men he has reformed into factors of good—agents of redemption; an unparalleled power to associate the men he has redeemed into societies with larger ideas than the states of the earth, societies with an ideal and mission of their own, or, rather, one that is altogether his."[3]

324. Closely related to the above consideration is this: Christ is the creator of a great diversity of

moral types. The essentials of Christian character are invariable. But these are so comprehensive and touch human nature so deeply in the springs of conduct that a great variety is manifest in the result. Mr. Lecky, who is assuredly not biased in favor of orthodox Christianity, has been much impressed with this fact. There were two chief defects in Stoicism, according to him, in which it compared most unfavorably with Christianity. Its moral ideal was fixed. As a discipline of self control and the means of developing an iron will it had merit, but it lacked flexibility. It could make heroes but not common men. As a result, it never reached the masses of men. Christianity, on the other hand, accomplished both. "The Christian type," says Mr. Lecky, "is the glorification of the amiable, as the Stoic type was that of the heroic qualities, and this is one of the reasons why Christianity is so much more fitted than Stoicism to preside over civilization, for the more society is organized and civilized, the greater is the scope for the amiable, and the less for the heroic qualities."[4] The above general conclusion is in the main correct, though it is a mistake to suppose that Christianity is unproductive of the heroic type in the highest sense. Mr. Lecky's statement warrants a twofold inference regarding Christ and his moral type. First, Christ anticipated the future course of civilization and conformed to it and thus was enabled to influence it. Or else Christ created the course of future civilization by means of the new type which he

proclaimed. Confessedly this type was new; it was unknown in his day. But Christ made it successful, and is making it successful today, among many races, in many climates, and among all classes.

325. (2) This leads us to the next evidence of the workableness of Christianity, which is its success in overcoming opposition. The typical instance of this is the early persecutions. These persecutions exhibit the new faith over against the world-forces of the early centuries. Attempts have been made to minimize the persecutions. We need not pause to consider these attempts. One fact is perfectly clear. In these repeated and long continued efforts to extinguish the faith of Christians, we see that faith acting upon the world, and the total combined forces of the world acting upon Christianity. It was as if the antagonists were placed upon a raised platform, and the surrounding space cleared of all obstructions for the world to behold the conflict. This new spiritual power was utterly foreign to the dominant forces of the age. It was in deadly antagonism to the prevalent polytheism. The current philosophy scarcely recognized its existence and scorned it when it came under its notice. The power of the Roman government was directed in fury against its very life. Its triumph is too well known to dwell upon. When Julian afterwards attempted again to suppress it, he failed utterly. The reported reply of a Christian priest to the taunting question of one of Julian's subjects during the latter's campaign against Christianity contains a strik-

ing hint of the new law of the development of civilization. The priest was asked by the rhetorician Libanius, "What is your carpenter's son doing now?" and replied, "He is now making a coffin for your Emperor."[5]

326. The successful conflict of Christianity with the world forever baffles every attempt to explain the former on grounds of naturalistic evolution. Here was progress through crisis, indeed. Adopting the evolutionary phraseology for a moment, the organism did not succeed by adaptation *to* but by adaptation *of* environment. The worldly environment was in deadly hostility to the organism. Yet according to evolution no life can survive without correspondence with environment. What conclusion follows? This, that the environment was not merely natural. It was also supernatural. Christ stood within the shadow keeping watch above his own.

327. This correspondence with a supernatural environment explains also the remarkable power of recovery from within which has been a mark of Christianity from the beginning. When the opposition of the world takes not the form of persecution, which usually quickens its power, but of a chilling influence, which devitalizes it, leaving it apparently dead, it shows remarkable capacity for self-recovery. From some secret source it draws life and power and suddenly through some great personality it utters its voice and exerts its power, and once more the kingdom

comes. Throughout the Christian centuries is found the evidence of this power.

328. (3) A third evidence of the workableness of Christianity is its ability to take hold upon and mould the life of diverse peoples. Now it is a peculiarity of the ethnic faiths, the great national religions of the world that they have won their chief triumphs among peoples kindred to those among whom the religions themselves have taken their rise. This is true of Buddhism and Mohammedanism. Christianity, on the contrary, was rejected by the Jews and accepted by gentile peoples. It was an oriental faith conquering the occident, and again in our day it is moving eastward with conquering power. Thus it appears that the ordinary law of development was reversed. National genius did not create and does not perpetuate Christianity.

329. (4) Again, the workableness of Christianity appears in the universality of its ideals. Jesus taught no specific governmental or social order. Socialists and individualists alike have claimed Jesus, but his name cannot be appropriated by any temporary propaganda which has arisen in two thousand years. Christianity has existed in harmony with any and all forms of government. It is the religion and the ethics of man as man and not of any race or people. Its principles are capable of the most varied application. Like leaven it works in and transforms oriental or western society alike.[6] Like a river which is colored by its bed or by the surrounding

soil, this faith flows on its way. Yet no corrupting hue or tint can abide. The river is absorbent and it is cleansing, adapted to all, purifying all.

330. (5) Closely related to the preceding point is the fact that Christianity has demonstrated its power of producing symmetry of character. We have in a previous chapter noticed the matchless unity and symmetry of character in Christ himself. All the contents of virtue, so far as known to man at present, Christianity inculcates and produces. It is not meant, of course, that every Christian is symmetrical in moral attainment. Nor that all the elements of virtue are noticeable in any one community or period among Christ's people. But it is meant that there is no form of moral excellence which can be named which has not been created under Christian motives and forces. Often the result has come in a one-sided or partial manner. But that excellence which is absent at one period appears in another. This fact suggests that the moral resources are exhaustless. Mill was not wrong in saying that to live as Christ would have us live would be the attainment of the ideal of virtue. Romanes also was entirely justified in his strong assertions as to the permanence of Christ's teachings, the race never having outgrown one of them.

331. (6) A last remark as illustrative of the workableness of Christianity is that its course in history has been one of progressive attainment. This will appear in the next chapter, but must be noted

here. In this respect the religion of Christ contrasts sharply with all the ethnic faiths. The latter reach a stage of arrested development and cannot proceed further. They possess no power of self-recovery or of continuous progress. It is true of Buddhism and Mohammedanism that they appear to have reached the end of their ethical progress. Higher forms do not appear. But the Christian religion throbs with a life and power today such as it has not known for centuries. It has recovered from a long period of corruption and inward decay during the dark ages. Forces foreign to itself gained a foothold within and seemed to have well-nigh destroyed its spiritual power. Christ conquered a few great hearts, restored to the world the literary sources in the New Testament books, and the world swung out into a new moral career. Christ's name and influence colors, if it has not yet fully subdued, every element of western civilization. Now this progressive realization of its ideal is one of the surest evidences of the workableness of Christianity. Christ has not yet saved the world, but he has taken hold of the world savingly; and this is the chief thing. The real test of the Christian ideal is not whether it can be realized fully in a human life under present conditions, but whether it is capable of acting as a perpetual incentive; whether it works not perfectly but dynamically. Surely it does thus act upon men. Surely it has become the moral and religious working force of the upward

movement of the world. The revolving centuries, nay, the eternal years of God are Christ's. He will yet complete his work. The end is delayed because the process is costly and exacting. As Dr. Alexander Maclaren has said: "Let no man say, because high noon seems long in coming, that it will never come. Let us rather say as we wait in the gloom, how glorious will that day be, of which the twilight dawn has lasted nineteen hundred years."[7]

332. Before closing this chapter we must bestow a brief glance upon the cause of the success of Christianity. Many attempt to account for it without the supernatural. Gibbon's explanation does not touch the real question of the origin of the faith whose triumph he records.[8] Mr. Lecky has said that "the chief cause of its success was the congruity of its teaching with the spiritual nature of mankind." Again he says: "One great cause of the succcess of Christianity was that it produced more heroic actions and formed more upright men than any other creed."[9] But neither of these statements *explains* the success of Christianity. Stoicism itself, as a moral system contained many of the loftiest ideas found in Christianity, and was congruous so far with man's nature, but it did not succeed. And to assert that Christianity "produced more heroic actions and formed more upright lives" than other creeds is merely to point out the effect, not the cause. How did Christianity thus produce so many heroic actions and upright lives?

333. We cannot enlarge upon the answer, but may suggest it. The central truth of the reply is that Christianity, as distinct from other religions, represents the divine initiative in salvation. In other faiths man seeks God. In this God seeks man. The incarnation of God in Christ is a reversal of the world movement in religion. Other religions by their gropings and searchings after God prepare the way for this. But this is different in degree and kind from them.

334. In this religion of the divine Initiative there were two chief factors. The first was Revelation, the second Energy. Consider briefly the Revelation. In Christ man is revealed to himself. Man did not know his own moral nature or possibilities in any adequate way. His likeness to God, his eternal existence in a future life, his priceless worth, the nature of the sin which kept him from God, he did not understand save in a vague manner. Christianity was not merely congruous with man's spiritual nature, it was also an interpretation of that nature.

Christianity was also a Revelation of God. Men believed in God before Christ came. But the idea of God had never before proved itself practically efficient, capable of transforming men of all nations and grades of character. Why was this? The philosopher Kant said we cannot prove God's existence by the natural reason. We believe in him because our moral nature demands him. But this

leaves God a mere assumption of the moral nature or a dim phantom of speculation. Kant's view, while defective, has in it something of the truth. The idea of God must take some form more vital than a speculation or an assumption if it is to move us deeply.

335. J. H. Newman has said that great ideas never command us until personalized in some great character. Now the idea of God as a person could never be made potent in the highest degree over men's lives until it, too, was personalized. Only a person can reveal a person. A garment, an epistle, a token may suggest a person, but they are inconclusive and inadequate if no one ever saw him from whom they come. So the garment of God in nature, his epistles in conscience and reason, his tokens all about us came short. Hence this great conception of God became personalized. The law *was given,* but grace and truth *came"* (John i. 17).

Professor William James holds that every view of the universe below the personal plane, such as Materialism, and every view which seeks to go beyond or above the idea of a personal God, are doomed to be cast aside by man because they do not stimulate him to practical endeavor.[10]

336. The practical test is applied to all ideas. The idea of God even failed as a sufficient practical stimulus until it was revealed in Christ. In him it became a power capable of acting successfully upon all types of men. The Ritschlian theology does

homage to this truth in a peculiar way. It waives the question of the real divinity of Christ, but claims that he has for us the *value of God* and thus reaches and saves men. The idea of God alone fails, its value must be set forth in personal human terms. This truth is recognized in this very inadequate theology.

The other factor in the religion of the divine Initiative is Energy. Mr. Lecky's theory that the success of Christianity was due to its congruity with man's spiritual nature is answered by all the moral history of the race apart from Christ. Congruity with man's nature alone has never been a guarantee of success in moral teaching. Power is the great need, reinforcement of a feeble will. "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation." It is a divine purpose working through the indwelling spirit towards his eternal kingdom.

337. Dim and feeble is the light of mere theism when compared with that of Christianity. Hear what one says who can go no further than the bare belief in a personal God: "We stand on a mountain pass in the midst of whirling snow and blinding mist, through which we get glimpses now and then of paths which may be deceptive. If we stand still we may be frozen to death. If we take the wrong road we shall be dashed to pieces. We do not certainly know whether there be any right one. What must we do? 'Be strong and of good courage.' Act for the best, hope for the best, and take what comes;

if death ends all we cannot meet death better."[11] With this contrast the Christian hope based on the revelation of God in Christ, "which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil: whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. vi. 19, 20).

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PAST AND PRESENT CHRIST AND HIS SUPREME ACT.

338. There are two fruitful ways of looking at Christ's action in history. One is to confine attention to his achievements in individuals and society. The other considers not these many achievements so much as his one great achievement in taking and keeping hold of the world. One method counts the deeds of Christ, the *gesta Christi;* the other has regard to the one great deed, the *gestum Christi.* It is usual to pursue the former method of counting the trophies of Christ. We shall bestow a brief glance on these, but our plan in this chapter will be to regard the matter from the other standpoint. For, when we have counted the net gains of Christianity in the world we have barely touched the surface of the problem. But when we have properly estimated Christianity as a force now acting on the world we are thereby raised to an elevation whence we may scan the past and forecast the future. The plea we now urge for the truth of Christianity is not based on what it has accomplished merely, nor on what one might surmise that it may accomplish, but rather on what Christianity is now doing. We aim

to show the quality of its work, and how potential it is. The past will thus be illumined, and the "one far off divine event" of the future draw nearer and become more real.

339. Glance first, then, at the humane side of Christ's achievements in history. The long view here is the view that tells. Out of numerous illustrations we select the changes in the condition of the child, the woman, and the slave. For it was on these that the weight of wrong pressed most heavily. What Christ found in the world and how he has changed the world eloquently speak of his power. The Roman father's power over his child was absolute. He could expose, scourge, mutilate, marry, divorce, sell as slave, or kill his own child according to law. Roman fathers in many instances, according to the records, actually slew their own sons and daughters. One of the most shocking modes of asserting this power was the exposure of children. Parents would sometimes plead poverty as justification for selling their children for basest purposes or exposing them to death. Mr. Loring Brace, who gives an excellent account of these practices in his valuable work, quotes a saying from Quintilian to the effect that "to kill a man is often held to be a crime, but to kill one's own children is sometimes considered a beautiful action among the Romans." "Ovid gives a pathetic picture of the new born whose first day was its last, exposed to wild beasts; and describes those who flit about in the night, seek-

ing for these unfortunate little creatures for the worst of purposes."[1]

The status of woman under Roman law was but a step removed from that of children. She was the property of her husband, a chattel rather than a person. The husband had absolute power of her person and property, including the power of life and death. In India and China, and in Mohammedan countries today woman is still delivered over to the absolute control of her husband. She is the abiding martyr of the social order in every non-Christian land.

The contrast to these conditions presented in America and other Christian countries needs not to be detailed. The shock which we feel in the mere reading of the above statements is a sufficient evidence of the change of sentiment. In some American states we occasionally hear the fear expressed that so much legislation has been enacted to safeguard the rights of the wife, that those of the husband may be endangered.

Slavery in the ancient world was most revolting to the modern mind in many of its practices. Tacitus gives an instance where six hundred slaves were executed for the mad act of one of their number in killing his master. A Roman put a slave to death to "afford a spectacle to a guest who had never seen a man die." Pollio, a Stoic, amused himself by feeding his fish with fragments of his mutilated slaves.[2] Everywhere in the ancient world slavery

was recognized as a normal and proper thing in the social order.

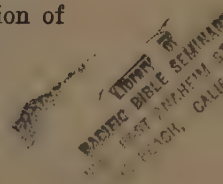
340. We cannot here dwell upon the brutality and cruelty of the Roman games, nor the laxity of the marriage relation, nor the dreadfully low state of morals which left that ancient civilization rotten at the core, and struck through its vitals a hideous moral disease. The knell of that civilization had sounded long before the fatal blow fell from the North.

341. There are three ways of showing that Christianity was the chief agency in reforming the evils we have touched upon. One is to show that its teachings are opposed to them. Both the spirit and the letter of the New Testament were working as silent forces in the early centuries of our era to undermine them all. A second way is to show that no other force existed which could cope with these evils. Stoicism alone merits attention here. It sometimes recognized and condemned, but had no power whatever to eradicate the abuses or introduce a regenerating force into society. The third way is to show that Christian influences leavened society and actually shaped legislation in the direction of reform. It is clear as day that Christianity was the leavening force which began the new era of progress. The legislation of Constantine and that of Justinian are outstanding examples. The history of the times before and especially after Constantine bears on its face too plainly to be gainsaid the marks of its

transforming energy. Mr. Lecky does not hesitate to award to this religion the crown of pre-eminence as the new regenerating force of the world.[3]

342. We must here note one great achievement of Christ, which illustrates the nature of his power over men. He created the ideal of charity. Gifts were frequent among the ancients, but they were not based on the principle of altruism. They had regard to the giver. They were means to a self-regarding end.[4] The heathen *liberalitas* never approached the Christian *charitas* in self-forgetting love for others.[5] The latter was of the essence of Christianity. The poor and outcast became the chief treasures of the church in the great cities. Hospitals and other similar institutions sprang up as the inevitable result of this principle. Christian charity too often has been indiscriminate and unwise. But here as elsewhere Christianity carries with it its own principle of regeneration and correction. Christians of today are grappling with the total problem of the application of the principles of charity in the most thorough going manner, and are slowly moving towards a solution.

343. Let us now pass behind the deeds of Christ to the deed of Christ. Is it possible to find the spot where his hand is resting on the world today? Has he taken a large hold upon it or has he merely touched the surface? Whither is the world tending, so far as influenced by him? What promise of a happy outcome, is contained in the present action of



Christ? For reply it must be said that the present action of Christ upon men and society is best described by the word Regeneration. This is his great present act. We must seek to make good this claim. We must note the tokens of this process in society about us and endeavor to show that Christ is the force which carries it on.

344. The first evidence to be noted is the moral discontent of the age. Political discontent, industrial unrest may or may not have had a moral basis in the past. Today no one will dispute that the moral ideal is in high favor. Its worth is conceded by nearly all schools of thought, Christian and non-Christian, Agnostic and Theistic. It asserts itself in literature. It clamors in the current demand for readjustments in the industrial world. It insists upon rights, or it preaches duties in all walks of life. The assumption behind the movement is that society must not and cannot become fixed in any form which works injustice, which enshrines wrong in statute-books or social custom.

345. But whence this moral discontent? The answer is, it is due to the new ideal of humanity which has taken possession of the consciousness of the western world. The conspicuous feature of ancient civilization was that the state was everything, the individual nothing. The ideal state of Plato left little play for individuality, especially the individuality of the common man. Today on the contrary the worth of the individual is slowly trans-

forming our ideals in political and economic and religious life. In the state the right to vote, in the industrial world the right to an opportunity, in the religious sphere freedom to worship God, are the ideals. Liberty, equality, fraternity, the watchwords of current endeavor were ideas entirely foreign to the ancient world. The right of every man to count as one, and the right of no man to count as more than one is Professor Nash's way of stating it.[6] The man at the bottom is still a man, the man at the top is no more than a man.

346. The conviction of the worth of the individual, the value of humanity as such, has created the other conviction that society is capable of development towards a perfect ideal, that it is possible for men to live together as brothers, free and equal. Out of this conviction has arisen the modern missionary. The missionary in all spheres seeks to raise up the downmost man to a place suitable for humanity at least. The Christian missionary to foreign lands is the finest expression of this missionary spirit. He believes that the lowest and vilest may be redeemed and goes to the ends of the earth to introduce the saving forces to men who know them not.

Is Jesus Christ the author of the moral discontent of the world? It is certainly significant that it exists on a large scale only where his influence is felt. Glancing over the world at large this impressive fact stands out clearly. But it appears even

more clearly as we study the Christianity of Christ and the early churches.

347. Christ's doctrine of God suggests the answer. The Father of Christ the eternal God had a will towards the world. He desired the salvation of all men. "He willeth that none should perish." The Greeks thought of God as a contemplative Being, who had power of thought, but little energy of will. The Incarnation was the Christian conception, a God with initiative, a God willing and anxious to save. The correlative of the incarnation is the worth of the soul, the value of the individual man. Man must have been of infinite worth to warrant the stooping of God to save him. This worth of man underlay the decision of the Nicene council pronouncing Christ divine. It was thought that thus alone was man's salvation safeguarded. This view of the worth of man as such was wholly new to the world when Christ came. In it lie the roots of the modern moral discontent.

348. Christ's doctrine of sin was also new, or at least found only in Judaism in any similar form. Sin became a new and more terrible thing when it was seen to be related to God, when men saw it in the white light of his holiness. Discontent, the need of a better social order and the need of redemption were the inevitable corollaries of the teaching of Christianity concerning sin. Even the doctrine of the Fall of man, as has been urged, acted as a tremendous stimulus to moral discontent.[7] George

Eliot somewhere expresses pity for those who have no past experience of moral elevation, no lofty ideals, or heights from which they may have a sense of falling, with which they may compare present failure. The doctrine of the Fall kept alive the idea that man was made in God's image. Mr. Lecky thinks the doctrine of sin was central in the regenerating power of the Gospel in Europe.[8]

349. Saved individuals entered the new spiritual society, the church. No provision was made for humanity as such in the ancient states. Hence a new spiritual society was necessary as the seedplot of the new ideas. In the church, rich and poor, bond and free, patrician and plebeian, Greek, Roman, Jew, Barbarian sat together equal before God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Direct approach to God in worship, the priesthood of all believers, a citizenship of each with identical privileges in the Kingdom of God, these were the principles of the little spiritual democracies which sprang up all around the Mediterranean in the first century of our era. Liberty, equality, fraternity found concrete expression in them all. In these little democracies lay the germs of most of the great conceptions which enrich the political and economic thinking of today.

350. The idea of liberty, for example, implies that men are answerable ultimately to God alone for conduct and belief, and that the individual life has worth apart from the state. Equality asserts that there is a universal element in man reducing all to

a common level, or rather raising all to a common height. Likeness to God in original constitution, separation from God through sin, and a common need of redemption swept away distinctions of rank and caste. Fraternity implied that man's true life is a life of love and justice in a universal society in time and eternity. Separation of church and state, a free church in a free state, was the logical outcome of this new ideal of man. For if man has direct access to God no priest or state may intervene. Moreover, a godless state becomes impossible when it grants freedom of worship. For freedom of worship implies that God is higher than the state. If the state, in other words, is the highest authority, then no restraint will be upon it in dealing with its subjects or citizens even in their religious life. The highest interest will control. Expediency will dictate every policy. The ancient ideal of the state is inevitable save on the basis of belief in God. Worship of the state is always the practical outcome in its absence. In Japan the remnants of this ideal are seen today in the boundless devotion of her soldiers. The apotheosis of the Roman Emperor was its ancient fruit. It was here the early Christians clashed with the world power.

351. Economic and industrial is closely connected with religious freedom. What are our new teachings in political economy? For one thing that society owes each man an opportunity. Equality of individual worth carries with it the necessary im-

plication that no man should be crowded to the wall from lack of opportunity. The powerful should be restrained and held within proper limits. Men differ in natural ability, of course, and individuality should be respected. But the cunning or wise or mighty individual shall not ruthlessly crush his feebler brother, for "in the image of God created he him." In short, our new political economists are telling us that Christ's parable of the talents is the ideal of industrial society. Every man according to his ability in effort and opportunity, and every man according to faithfulness in reward,—this is the goal of economic thinking today. It is simply the law of the spiritual kingdom of Christ transferred to the economic sphere, showing the spirituality of all life, and the identity of the principles of the divine society in time and eternity.

352. If it were necessary to show the continuity of the Christian ideal of humanity through the centuries it could be done. A brief sketch is all we shall attempt. Unfortunately for Christianity after Constantine, the church compromised with the state, and the sense of her spiritual calling passed in large measure out of her consciousness. Perishing with spiritual hunger and thirst, like the outcast Hagar in the wilderness, Paganism wandered in desolation. Like an angel from heaven Christianity met and comforted her with the new view of the soul and its salvation. But henceforth the angel sought an alliance with her whom she had pointed to the upward

path, and thereby lost her own knowledge of the way. Through many weary centuries the conflict of church and state went on. As action and reaction are equal, as balance is the law of political as well as moral and physical action, so Christianity on the wide arena of history became an ecclesiastical empire like that of Rome. Once more the worth of the individual, Christ's ideal, passed into a long eclipse. The organization was everything, the individual nothing. Only in recent years has the conception of a free church in a free state been made actual in legislation and society.

353. In spite of the decline of Christendom, however, and the loss of spiritual power, Christ never left himself without witnesses. Through the ages a body of people called by his name have kept alive the fires on the altar of a spiritual religion. The long succession of heretical sects, the Montanists, the Novatians, the Donatists, the Albigenses, the Waldensians, the Anabaptists, with greater or less clearness, stood for the original spiritual ideal of the Gospel, that is, the worth of the soul, its salvation through Christ, the necessary outcome in a holy character and a purified society. Monasticism especially, one-sided as it was, stood for this principle that the soul has rights as against the ecclesiasticism and the state. The world was forsaken because men felt that only thus could they maintain fellowship with God and realize the ends of existence. Luther, the monk, came forth in due time, and brought out

into the world again the ancient view, justification by faith, the priceless worth of the soul, the energetic action of God in Christ to save.[9] Henceforth Europe shall thrill with a new life, and every movement shall feel the new moral force which a liberated Gospel brings with it. Civic and religious freedom, a new moral crusade, a new sense of stewardship, the "white man's burden," the call to education and to world-wide evangelization, the rise of the new ideal of humanity in the Puritan Revolution in England, and in the American commonwealth,—all these follow in due time. At last the Pagan ideal of society has been cast off. The individual has come to his rights. The worth of man as man is recognized. "The rank is but the guinea stamp," the gold is the man beneath. The state and the church were made for man, not man for the state. Society can be, must be, reorganized in the interests of humanity, not of classes or castes. The kingdom of God is coming, the "far-off divine event" is the only goal of history. History itself is dynamic. It moves and progresses.

Now this is the *Gestum Christi,* his great achievement. He has fused together the parts of the world. He has unified the forces of history and put life into them. With boundless patience he has awaited his day, when rebellious and intractable humanity should become plastic under his hand. The pull of his mighty leadership is felt today through-

out the western world and is beginning to be felt in the far east.

354. Various are the modes of recognizing his leadership. Social and labor reformers sometimes scoff at the church, but they exalt Christ. Unitarians deny that he is so great as orthodoxy has claimed, but maintain that his character is imitable and that as our great Example he is the hope of the world. Doubters of the metaphysical side of the doctrine of his person surrender to the inspiration of his transcendent character, and exclaim,

"If Jesus is a man,
And only a man, I say,
Of all mankind I will follow Him
And follow Him alway.

"If Jesus is a God
And the only God, I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea and the air."

In science, also, men are beginning to see that nature must finally be set forth in terms of Christ. The struggle for the life of others, and not merely the self-centered "struggle for life," must be recognized in nature. Our modern poets are coming under his sway. For what is the message of Lowell or Wordsworth or Tennyson or Browning but a glorification of him as the highest hope of man. Philosophy, too, in certain of its recent idealistic

forms tends more and more to crown him as the supreme revelation of the total significance of the world.

Evangelical Christians, of course, regard Christ in their own way and they think it is the only adequate way. He represents for them God's action in history. To them he is the creator of the saints of all ages. Conversion, the regeneration of the individual life, is his typical work. His moral supremacy on the broad stage of history grows out of his moral and religious supremacy in the soul. One has well said that the regeneration of the individual is the true genesis of the social conscience. His first coming had but one logical outcome, and that was his constant and continued coming in moral and spiritual power. Again, his constant and continued coming now can but issue in his second coming in due time. The phenomenon of his first works as represented in regenerated men and societies is being reproduced today. The sublime conception of a regenerated world is taking fresh hold of his people. His divine work, in part today, is the foreign missionary enterprise. This on the one side, and, on the other, the moral discontent of the age, already outlined, are the opposite poles of the movement he is leading. Each alike signalizes his grasp upon the world's thought and life. Each implies the vastness of the salvation he reveals and accomplishes, and the necessity of his personal presence to carry the movement to a successful issue.

355. The argument for Christ and Christianity which we urge here, we must now say in closing, is not the many things he has done so much as the one thing he is doing, not results alone, but potentialities. There is conclusive and even overwhelming evidence of his present energy in the world. No precious or desirable item in the world's hopes are wanting in the cargo of spiritual goods which he is steering across the sea of time. No storm has yet made shipwreck of him and his. There is no sign in the sky that any storm can ever arise, and past history shows that there is no hidden rock, unknown to him, which has power to bring on permanent disaster. The divine voice which broke the silence of the ages when he spoke two thousand years ago, speaks today; the great hope which then crossed the earth and led captive the hearts of men looms larger than in all the past. The generations will file after him in long procession and stand at last with him, the older brother, inside the Father's House.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ARGUMENT FROM CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

356. In the investigation of nature one of the chief difficulties is that we are obliged to study any force or phenomenon in combination with other forces or phenomena. Multiple effects are usually seen as the product of multiple causes. A great step forward is made when a particular cause and its effect can be disentangled from its companion causes and effects. The light of a heavenly body when resolved into its elements by means of spectrum analysis is far more adequately understood than when viewed simply through the telescope. So also in other departments of nature. The important point is to pierce through the cloud of attendant appearances to the essential inner principle. Sometimes this principle is so subtle and elusive that it can never be detected save as imbedded in something more gross and portable. The new force radium comes usually in combination with something else, as in a bromide or chloride, and yet its real nature is in a measure understood.

Christianity is like the natural order here. As a cause in the world it is often difficult to disentangle it from other causes. There is one manifestation of

it, however, where this statement does not hold. In the missionary enterprise the essential Christian motive and end are clearly seen. Its unlikeness to other forces in the social and moral order here stands out in sharply defined outline. Properly understood the missionary enterprise is the true interpretation of Christianity. As such it points back to the true origin of this religion and to the nature of the force which operates in it. We shall now endeavor to define and exhibit the missionary movement in several important aspects. It will thus appear that it is not to be accounted for on the plane of naturalism, but is rather the result of a divine Power.

357. For the sake of clearness we consider the missionary movement under the following heads: Its conception of its task, its motive, its method, the energy with which it has wrought, and its results. First we notice the conception of the missionary task. The Jews were a narrow people. Yet throughout their sacred literature ever and anon a note of universalism is sounded. This universalism fell like a sunbeam across the consciousness of Abraham in the promise that in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. It breaks forth in the prayer of Solomon and in the somewhat martial psalms of David. It is heard sometimes in the energetic and vivid message of Habakkuk, and reaches its most impressive announcement in Isaiah's "wild seraphic fire." But the Jewish people never

assimilated the idea. It was a seed which fell on stony ground until Jesus vitalized it and made it grow. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," was his final command. Through Paul the idea of the universal destination of the Gospel conquered. In conquering it saved Christianity itself from becoming a mere Jewish sect. Thus did its universal principles become detached from Jewish narrowness. Paul died at Rome where all the highways of the known world met. "Let me go to Rome," was the great apostle's plea for many years, "and if I may not go unbound, put the fetters on me and let me go in chains." Thus some one has indicated the spirit of the great apostle. Paul's spiritual vision was clear. He perceived the strategic position of Rome for the missionary movement. Having reached Rome, potentially the Gospel had reached the world. Rome was the spiritual heart of mankind, whose pulsations sent the life blood to the utmost extremities of the body.

Consider the audacity, nay the folly, of the handful of Jewish preachers after Christ's departure in their conception of their spiritual undertaking. What did they assume? Simply this: authority over the entire race, spiritual dominion over every nation, and kindred and tribe and tongue. To measure their apparent resources against the proposed result is simply to convict them of madness. Yet observe this other assumption of theirs, viz., that God is himself a missionary and that the center of the current

of history is moral and spiritual. This enterprise anticipates most strikingly the modern view of the world as taught by science. The unity of the race and the solidarity of human society lie at the heart of its ideal. With divine insight it recognized that the law of progress is ethical, that nothing permanently counts as progress which is unethical. It is often asserted that the early preachers expected a speedy coming of the end of the world. But assuredly their missionary programme allows room for as extended a period as may be necessary to accomplish the result.

358. In spite of the appearances against these men, history has vindicated them. Today, after a missionary triumph steadily advancing nearly two thousand years to a new world-view and to a new fullness of times, their undertaking is being repeated on a vaster scale, and on a vaster stage of action.

The missionary task, then, which Christianity proposes for itself is the introduction of spiritual and regenerating forces throughout the world. It proposes to create a type of character in the individual and society, which is by common consent the highest known to man. This ideal dates back to Christ himself and has had a continuity running through the Christian centuries. It has never since New Testament days appeared in purer form than today. The moral grandeur of the undertaking has never moved the people of Christ more powerfully or exhibited it-

self on a broader stage of action than in our own generation. Says Mr. Dennis: "With the Spirit and Providence of God as its allies, it seems to be preparing for a single-handed and simultaneous struggle with every giant system of religious sophistry which for long centuries has held the human mind in darkness and bondage. It is face to face today with every great dominant religion of the earth, and it will soon be a question of the survival of the fittest and the triumph of the best."[1] Thus the first Gospel sounds out afresh. As the electric energy bears the cablegram beneath Atlantic waves from American to European shores, so spiritual energy has borne the message of the "Apostle to the Gentiles" through the shadows of two milleniums to this generation of Christians who have taken it up afresh under the same sense of exhilaration and joy of conflict between false systems and the Word.

359. Observe in the next place the divinely implanted motive of missions. The missionary movement is the highest type of altruism known to mankind. Givers to missions and missionaries themselves are above all reproach in their motive and aim. I refer, of course, to the movement as such and not to individual exceptions. If there is in it an element which can be properly designated as selfish it has not been pointed out. The career of a Carey or a Judson or a John G. Paton or of scores of others who might be named, would forever redeem

the enterprise as such from any element of the base or sordid.

All men recognize the beauty and worth of altruism. Prof. Huxley praised it and held that it can be realized only by conflict with the "cosmic process." The struggle for the life of others does, indeed, find place in the animal kingdom within narrow limits. Here, as in so many other respects, our students of nature are finding likenesses between brutes and men. Laughter, and language, and the power of reason, are no longer recognized universally as marking man off from these in a class by himself. It is true that this conclusion is not established on a firm scientific basis, but it is quite commonly held that many of the old lines of demarcation between man and beast have vanished.

The altruistic motive of missions, however, does introduce us to a totally new moral world. Neither worship nor universal love is found among animals. It is as natural for the lioness to rend and tear those of another species as to defend her own young. Across this great gulf no beast's foot has passed. Here is a path, indeed, "which no fowl knoweth and no vulture's eye hath seen." Indeed, the missionary impulse is non-human in the sense that non-Christians as a rule have no interest in it, and the subjects of it all assert that its origin is supernatural. This is, indeed, the secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear him, a white stone from him to be-

lievers which has written on it the name which none other knoweth.

360. Primarily this motive is love to Christ. It is created by him, and sustained by him. Its faith in God and man is his deathless faith. Its conception of the brotherhood of man is not the brotherhood of a common and a hopeless suffering, as in Buddhism, nor the brotherhood of grim endurance as in Stoicism, but rather the brotherhood of a common likeness to God and hope of immortality. Sin and its dire consequences create the need and Christ himself is the sinner's only hope.

361. We do not here contrast missionary toils or sacrifices with those of others, but rather the missionary motive. Others have endured as great hardships as the soldiers of the cross. Speaking of the early English explorers whom he designates "England's forgotten worthies," Mr. Froude says: "Life with them was no summer holiday, but a holy sacrifice offered up to duty, and what their Master sent was welcome." Then after describing old age and praising it, Mr. Froude continues: "God forbid we should not call it beautiful. It is beautiful, but not the most beautiful. There is another life, hard, rough and thorny, trodden with bleeding feet and aching brow; the life of which the cross is the symbol, a battle which no peace follows this side the grave; which the grave gapes to finish before the victory is won; and—strange that it should be so—this is the highest life of man. And so it was with

the servants of England in the sixteenth century. Their life was a long battle either with the elements or with men; and it was enough for them to fulfill their work and to pass away in the hour when God had nothing more to bid them do."[2]

362. If the above eulogy does not exaggerate the merit of Drake and Raleigh and John Davis and Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who were willing to die for their country in strange lands among wild peoples, surely in a far higher sense it applies to that army of men and women who for the love of man as man for Jesus' sake, have counted not their lives dear unto themselves and have endured equal suffering. Some of the early Spanish explorers were guilty of cruelty almost beyond belief in their dealings with the natives in new countries. DeSoto burned his native guides in Florida after they had served his ends. The English were not always exempt from the same charge of cruelty. Many of these men were noble patriots, and we should not wish to take one laurel from their brows. Yet their enterprise was one in which lust and the greed of gold mingled too often as corrupting motives. The exploitation of new lands and peoples commercially, which was the issue of their toils, was far from unselfish. In short, this enterprise, so admired by Mr. Froude, was totally different from that of the missionaries. Here is the language of one of the very first of these lovers of their kind whose careers the world yet fails to appreciate. The Apostle Paul says of himself: "We

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are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." Then describing his motive, spirit and aim, he goes on to say, "Giving no occasion of stumbling in anything that our ministration be not blamed; but in everything commending ourselves, as ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; in pureness, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well known; as dying and behold we live; as chastened and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." Then further he enjoins, "Having, therefore, these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. v. 20; vii. 1).

In this language of the apostle to the Gentiles we have the heart of Christian missions. "The ideal missionary," says one, "must have four passions—first, a passion for the truth; a passion for Christ; a passion for the souls of men, and a passion for self-sacrifice. And I may say that the history of mis-

sions in the last century has shown not one nor fifty nor one hundred, but thousands of men and women that have filled out the grand ideal of the mission service in the mission life."[3]

Now, this missionary impulse is of the very essence of Christianity, and it is the greatest thing in the world. Over and over again through the ages these men of the cross have brought back life and power to a worldly church. The spirit is ever the same, whether seen as in Father Damien going to live among lepers, or as in Moravian brethren taking the place of slaves in order to win slaves in the West Indies, or as in Livingstone dying in Africa, whose constant assertion was that the end of geographical exploration is evangelization. These men are Christ's heroes, who having put their hands to the plow look not back, and who till the harvest field of the world; perishing often by the way; waiting patiently for the early and the latter rain; gazing pathetically downward for the long delayed tender blades of promise; often compelled to measure time as God measures it, a thousand years as a day, and a day as a thousand years; yet knowing that they or their successors will reap in due season if they faint not; "toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back;" yet through all peaceful and glad of heart, serene and sunny in spirit, content to wait for the eternal garner, and never doubting that in the end, with the angels, they shall rejoice in the final harvest home. We search modern life in vain

for any moral or spiritual movement which can for a moment be compared with it, save when we find the same passion at work in the energy of a pure Christianity at home. For this is the spirit of all true Christian living, and this spirit is an alien and a stranger to the spirit which dwells in the world of the natural man and society.

363. In the next place we must consider briefly the missionary enterprise in its method of propagation.

First of all a confession must be made. During the Christian centuries the name of Christ has sometimes been coupled with forms of propaganda which achieved their triumphs by the sword. At others the torch and the fagot have compelled obedience to an ecclesiastical power wearing the garments of the church. In so far as this has been true a pseudo-Christianity has usurped the place of the true. These methods were very human, and while sometimes accompanied by an intense zeal, they exhibit no real kinship to the spirit of Jesus Christ. The only sword ever employed by him is the sword which, according to the apocalyptic image, proceeds from his mouth, the Word of the living God. But the unchristian methods of missions do not invalidate the true. They break the continuity of the Christian movement wherever they arise. Our own day has witnessed a remarkable return to the mission method and missionary aim of Christ himself.

364. What, then, is the Christian method of

propagation? It is so simple that when taken out of its connection it seems ridiculous, but when regarded in connection with its antecedents and its consequents it is most sublime. Waiving all detailed account of the contents of the Gospel call we will let the author of *Ecce Homo* give us the answer. The way in which Christianity has been and is being propagated may be summed up in one word: the announcement by Christ himself in the first place and afterwards through his followers to all men everywhere of this brief message, "I am your King." Simply this with all it implies of the cross and the ethical teaching is the Gospel. This has conquered men from the beginning. Thus has Christ founded a theocracy which is spreading over the earth. Says the author of *Ecce Homo*: "Some of the leading organizers of the world have said, 'I will work my way to supreme power, and then I will execute great plans.' But Christ overleaped the first stage altogether. He did not work his way to royalty, but simply said to all men, 'I am your King.' He did not struggle forward to a position in which he could found a new state, but simply founded it." The same writer remarks also that in contemplating Christ's scheme as a whole "three things strike us with astonishment. The first is its prodigious originality. What other man has had the courage or elevation of mind to say, 'I will build up a state by the mere force of my will without help from the kings of the world and without the use of the secondary causes

which unite men together—unity of interest or speech, or blood relationship.' We are also astonished at the calm confidence with which the scheme was carried out. We are equally astonished at the prodigious success of the scheme. It is not more certain that Christ presented himself to men as the founder, legislator and judge of a divine society than it is certain that men have accepted him in these characters, that the divine society has been founded, that it has lasted nearly two thousand years, that it has extended over a large and the most highly civilized portion of the earth's surface, and that it continues full of vigor at the present day."[4]

365. There is but one explanation of the answer men have given to Christ's astounding call and command. And that is that he knew the human soul as no other ever knew it. When he said to men, "I am your King," he spoke as the voice of eternal truth. The great deep of human need echoed the call of the great deep of God's voice. The one thing matched the other, as if the parts had once been separated and now at length had found each other. It was man welcoming back, so to speak, a lost segment of his own nature. Christ and man are organically one. Man thinks his supreme need is freedom. In his deeper moods and struggles he knows that his supreme need is a Master, who can enable him to win moral victory and thus find true freedom. Christ

is the true answer to that need. And this explains the succcess of the Christian propaganda.

366. We consider next the energy with which the missionary spirit has wrought and the success it has won. These two characteristics may well be treated together, as they are fundamentally one. The divine origin of this missionary impulse is seen in this, that it is the inevitable fruit of the new birth. When Christians or church organizations become engrossed in political or secular ambitions, and war with the state, missionary zeal wanes. But when God deals directly with the soul in regenerating power at once the sympathies reach out to the lost and an aroused civic and commercial conscience appears. This was the genesis of New Testament missions. The Moravians, those marvels of missionary zeal and consecration, owe their origin to Pietism, the seventeenth century revival of the inner life which brought back the soul's direct experience of Christ and God. Spener and his followers insisted upon prayer, fellowship with God, and Bible study; in short, the direct relation of every believing soul with God.[5] William Carey's unconquerable missionary conviction, by which he aroused English and American Christians at the end of the eighteenth century, was born of the same direct action of God upon his own soul.

367. This missionary impulse reached all the nearer objects in reaching across the seas to pagan peoples. Orphanages, hospitals, emancipation of slaves, prison reform, Sunday schools for neglected

city children, agitation for better administration of charities, and scores of other reform movements were set in motion along with the missionary enterprise. When we find the essential law of this activity, its real inner meaning, it is simply the law of the cross, dying to live, a holy purpose to redeem other men, because Christ has redeemed us. The church of Christ has no other meaning or justification than this. Every local band of worshipers, who understand their highest mission understands it thus. Such a church has ever been in evidence and has contrasted with every other organization on earth. The Moravians have three mottoes: "Every believer's work is witnessing for God; every believer's home is where he can do the most good; every believer's cross is self-denial for the Master's sake."[6]

In the early days the same was true of the church of Christ. It stood alone among the so-called benevolent organizations of the early Christian centuries. Asks Professor Sohm: "Where are the other countless unions which the great need of the masses once called into being in the Roman Empire? Where are they *now?* The wind of history has swept them away. Long ago, many centuries ago, not a trace of them was left. The Christian church, which rested on no exclusive nationality, endures solely in consequence of the living power of its religion.

'The history of the world
Is the world's judgment.'

No other religion has had power to guide the progress of our culture save Christianity alone. On its side were neither Roman legions nor ancient learning, but the power of divine truth, which is mightier than all the powers of our earthly life."[7]

368. The missionary ideal and motive have enlisted many of the choicest spirits in all history. Paul and Augustine, and Columba, and Boniface, and Ziegenbalg, and Carey, and Judson, and Duff, and Morrison of China, and Livingstone and Mackay of Uganda, and a countless host of others whom I may not name, stand upon a moral and spiritual eminence which the world today gladly recognizes.

369. These men have given to many heathen peoples new literatures. Bible translation has been one of their herculean labors. Today no less than 400 of these are in circulation throughout the earth. About 3,286,834 Bibles or parts of Bibles are distributed annually on mission fields.[8] Missions have been the mother of education everywhere. The Christian doctrine of God and the Christian principles of salvation demand enlightment. The deepest inward bond unites the educational and the evangelizing movement. The logical outcome is seen in the new interest in education wherever missionaries have gone.

Medical missions, and other forms of philanthropic endeavor inevitably attend the missionary advance. The bodies of men as well as their souls receive attention. Orphanages, hospitals, institutions for the

care of unfortunate child-widows and others in India mark the growth of the missionary life.

370. Missionary laborers have been marvels of patience. They have sometimes waited from one to six or seven years for their first convert. This is owing to the necessity often of creating a Christian language, and of well-nigh recreating the religious reason of peoples who are without a knowledge of the true God. Slow and tedious is the task of clearing the jungle of heathen superstition and digging foundations for the temple of the living God. And yet the success of the effort is beyond all question. Dr. Jas. S. Dennis has given many and convincing proofs of this in his account of the creation by missionary effort of a new type of individual character.[9] Civilization, indeed, in all its higher forms, is the proper fruit of Christianity. One missionary describes the effect of the conversion of a savage Zulu as a desire for clothing. He has a new self-respect and sense of worth. He secures a calico shirt and then a pair of duck trousers to cover his nakedness; then a three-legged stool to avoid soiling his trousers by sitting on the ground. "Then," says the missionary, "that man is about nine thousand miles above the natives around him."

371. Civilization is the clothing of intelligence and character. Men remain children in large measure until Christianity makes them men indeed. The commercial value of missions is beyond dispute. The missionary is the best friend of the manufacturer.

He who creates a demand for shirts, trousers and stools is an advance agent of the manufacturer of cotton goods and furniture.

The modern Protestant missionary movement is somewhat more than a hundred years old. The missionary societies now practically cover the earth in their operations. They employ 13,371 misisonaries; 69,670 native workers; they have 24,337 places of worship; 23,527 elementary schools; 960 institutions for higher education; 553 hospitals and dispensaries; 147 publishing or printing establishments, and there are 2,219,291 professing Christians.[10] The contributions of all Protestant Christians to foreign missions annually are about $17,000,000.00. Of course these figures do not begin to suggest even the value of the work done, in foundations laid, adherents won, influence gained, and leaven introduced into the social masses in foreign lands.

Christianity has occupied all the strategic points of the earth with missions and missionaries. As an army of moral conquest, in the matter of the disposition of the forces, the time seems to have arrived for the greatest advance of history. Indeed, that advance is already well begun. During the two hundred years between 1500 and 1700 Christianity added more to its numbers than during the first thousand years; from 1700 to 1800 it gained nearly as many adherents as during the first thousand years. Since the beginning of the present century Christianity has much more than doubled. It has gained nearly three

times as many during the past ninety years as it did during the first fifteen hundred years.[11]

372. The foregoing is an extremely inadequate sketch of missions. Our limits of space forbid enlargement of the theme. It is hoped, however, that enough has been said to suggest the exalted and divine motive and energy of Christian missions and to forecast future triumphs equal to any of the past and even greater. The missionary enterprise is the monumental evidence today before the eyes of all men that Christianity, so far from being a spent force, seems rather to be girding itself for its supreme effort in regenerating the world in Christ's image.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

CHRIST COMPARED WITH MOHAMMED AND BUDDHA.

In recent years two systems of belief have been frequently compared with Christianity. Mohammedanism and Buddhism are, next to the religion of Christ, the most impressive spiritual movements in historic time. One hesitates to attempt a comparison of these with Christianity in the form of a mere sketch within the limits of a few pages. The specialist in comparative religion would doubtless assert that many volumes might well be devoted to any attempt to exhaust the subject. Nevertheless, a very brief survey of the distinguishng marks of these religions, ought to prove valuable at least by way of suggestion.

373. First let us consider Mohammedanism. Few men of historic importance have been as variously estimated as Mohammed. We are not obliged to agree with Carlyle's high estimate of him, on the one hand, nor yet with some are we obliged to regard him as altogether an impostor, on the other. He was undoubtedly a great man in several respects. Sincere he must have been in his sense of a call and misson. It is equally certain that he had clear vision of some great truths. But no excellence in other re-

spects can blind us to his vices. His claim to be the inspired prophet of God breaks down under the strain of the direct and specific "revelations" which sanctioned the indulgence of his lust, and his robbing other men of their wives. Old Testament prophets were sometimes evil men or fell into great sin, but they did not claim inspired warrant for their sin.

374. Let us concede at once the value of the Mohammedan doctrine of one God, and his successful crusade against idolatry. The times were ripe in Arabia for such a movement, and it was a great achievement in the spiritual realm to purge out the worship of idols permanently and to lift many tribes to the level of a Monotheistic faith.

Again, we must concede the power and genius of the man who has succeeded in making the volume of his alleged revelations the one book of two hundred million members of the human race. The necessity for the study of the Koran has fostered elementary education in Mohammedan countries. History, however, fails to justify the oft vaunted preëminence of Mohammedanism in its scientific and literary spirit. One or two brief periods of the manifestation of such a spirit in fourteen hundred years scarcely justify the claim.

It may be asserted also that no political movement has surpassed Mohammedanism in its successful use of religion as its instrument. There has never been a closer union of church and state. In one aspect Mohammedanism is the church making use of the

state for its ends, and in another the state realizing itself through the church. Neither could have succeeded without the other. Our interest here is not in its political but in its religious ideals.

375. There are five leading practices which are religiously binding upon all Mohammedans. 1. The recital of Kalina, or Confession: There is but one God and Mohammed is his prophet. 2. Observance of the five daily periods of prayer. 3. The giving of alms. 4. The fast of Ramadan. 5. Pilgrimage to Mecca.[1]

There is an aspect of rigor and strenuous devotion in Mohammedan practice which challenges admiration. During the fast of Ramadan there is for one month from half-past two in the morning until night an entire abstinence from food and drink, no matter how heavy the burden of labor. With his face turned towards Mecca, his body prostrate, five times daily the devout Mussulman prays. Moreover, there is a boldness and openness in these devotions which is regardless of time, place or circumstances, contrasting sharply with the reticence and timidity of many Christians in their public confession.

Mohammedanism insists much upon almsgiving and provides freely for the poor, although this is collected by law like any other tax, and it leaves little play for spontaneity and the principle of voluntariness.

The abstinence of the Moslem from wine and

strong drink is another feature of his life deserving of strong commendation.

The obligation of pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime imposed by the Koran upon Moslems can scarcely be commended in any aspect of it. It imposes fearful hardships upon many who are unable to make it. It partakes of the quality of the lower heathen forms of religious devotion and not of a spiritual and advanced faith. And this leads to our next consideration, and that is its defects when compared with Christianity.

376. The most important idea in any form of religious belief is its conception of God. The Mohammedan does not equal the Jewish idea of God, to say nothing of the Christian. The God of Mohammedanism is described by the conception of a predestinating Omnipotence. Power is God's chief attribute. His decrees are fixed and irresistible. The holiness and love of God recede far into the background. The laws of the Koran are the expression not of a holy nature but of a sovereign will. They thus partake of the nature of rules rather than principles. They are statutes rather than ideals. Belief in God's decrees made great soldiers of Mohammedans. The absence of belief in his holiness and love makes them pitiless soldiers. Mohammed constantly insisted on the mercy of God, but this mercy was displayed in the relaxing of the demands of high morality for weak humanity. On the contrary, the Christian ideal is never relaxed. Weak

humanity, however, receives divine reinforcement in order to conform to it. Mohammedanism presents no working conception of God equal to the lofty ethical monotheism of Israel, while the infinite tenderness and love of Christ's revelation of God, combined with lofty and inflexible holiness, are incomparably superior.

377. In intimate relation with the conception of God is that of life and morals. Mohammedanism is far below Christianity in its view of sin. If God's arbitrary will makes a thing right, then there can be no deep essential distinction between right and wrong. Hence Mohammedan ethics are far below the Christian. The practice of concubinage and the facility of divorce, along with polygamy, are instances. In the Koran we read as follows: "O prophet, we have allowed thee thy wives unto whom thou hast given their dower, and also the slaves which thy right hand possesseth, of the booty which God hath granted thee; and the daughters of thy uncles and the daughters of thy aunts, both on thy father's side and on thy mother's side, who have fled with thee from Mecca, and any other believing woman, if she give herself unto the prophet; in case the prophet desireth to take her to wife."[2] In the second and fourth chapters also may be found instructions regarding divorce and polygamy.

Mohammedanism appeals exclusively to the hope of reward and to the fear of punishment. Its rewards and punishments, moreover, are on a low moral

plane. The Mohammedan heaven is a place of sensual enjoyment.[3] Thus it fails to provide for the higher spiritual life of man. The principle of external reward and punishment is adapted to men on the lower moral plane, and Christianity makes a wise use of it. But Christianity never sensualizes the hope of man after the manner of Mohammedanism. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," is the core of Christ's ethical idealism. He thus provides for the loftiest ranges of moral effort and inspires to the highest and best. This is but a fresh instance of the essential nature of Christianity which is not a set of statutory enactments touching life at this or that point, but a universal principle encompassing every need and condition of man.

378. In keeping with its idea of God, sin and character, Mohammedanism employs physical instead of moral means for its own propagation. This has been denied by some recent apologists for the religion of Islam.[4] But all its history, and particularly its early history, is against the denial. Moreover, the Koran expressly provides for the promulgation of the faith by force of arms. The reader is referred in proof of these statements to the second, forty-eighth and sixty-sixth chapters of the Koran. Those who professed the Christian religion have, in blind and wicked zeal, sometimes employed force in extending it, but Christians do not to-day defend it.

and all its literary sources, its inspired records in the New Testament, condemn it.

379. The great religions of the world have been personal religions. Confucius, Zoroaster, Mohammed, Buddha, Christ, are the names associated with their origin. The purer forms of these faiths always partake of the character of their founders. Personality is the great constructive force of the world of men. Mohammed's personality was magnetic and forceful. He seized the reins of power at an auspicious moment and inspired his followers with a zeal like unto his own, utilizing the military instinct of man for his ends. His propaganda became more political than religious, and we are to seek the causes of its success on the ethnological, sociological and political plane as much as on the moral and religious. In moral excellence or religious insight there is no possible ground for comparing him with Jesus Christ. Mohammed was a legalistic, moral and religious, and political reformer. Christ was and is a world Regenerator. Mohammedanism occupies a fixed and limited place on the landing of the stairs of man's upward reformatory movements. The religion of Christ stretches across the history of the race. Mohammedanism lifted men a little higher than they were but left them there. Christianity, ever dissatisfied with present attainment, is inspiring men to-day as never before.

380. Mohammedanism combines religious zeal with the natural love of conquest and engenders a

most stubborn form of human pride and self-complacency. This is the secret of the fixity of its character and of its imperviousness to outside influences. Mohammedan countries are unprogressive countries. Christianity creates ethical unrest, resulting in humility and ever deepening aspirations towards God. The religion of Islam is external, legal, mechanical; that of Christ is inward and vital. One relaxes law to accommodate weak men; the other regenerates weak men and enables them progressively to attain a divine ideal. One is the product of a human genius like other great movements bearing the stamp of an imposing personality, who in due time died and slept with his fathers; the other is a divine revelation through a transcendent Personality, who is immanent through his Holy Spirit in the world today. The religion of the Arabian prophet, in the final estimate of men, will be to Christianity as "moonlight unto sunlight and as water unto wine."

381. We must next consider, though all too briefly, a few of the leading characteristics of Buddhism. In the fifth century before Christ, arose Gautama, who later became the Buddha and founder of Buddhism. Like all the great "seekers after God," he was profoundly in earnest, possessed unusual spiritual insight and achieved some very remarkable results. His personal force must have been very great, though materials for the construction of an authentic biography are quite scanty. The make of the human spirit is such that when a great

soul begins a thoroughgoing search for religious or moral truth some fragment of reality is usually the reward of his labors. Many of these fragments have been struck out of the experiences of men in the storm and stress of their passionate and eager search for soul-rest and a knowledge of eternal things. The uniform badge of them all, however, is their fragmentary character, their inadequacy to meet man's total need. Christ's revelation is God's answer to this quest of man, and as such it has slaked every form of soul thirst yet awakened in the human spirit.

The connection of Buddhism with its environment in its earliest development seems tolerably well made out. In part it was the result of the religious and moral idiosyncracies of a great personality; in part the result of reaction against existing abuses; and in part the application of a philosophic conception, current in his day, to the problems of life in a new way.

382. The first impulse of the Buddha was from within, his own longing for peace, the spiritual hunger and thirst of his own soul especially in view of the pain and misery of life. It is related that his religious career began as a result of four visions. One was the vision of a decrepit old man who impressed him with the inevitable decay of the human body; another was of an emaciated invalid whose condition marked the tyranny of disease over men; still another was that of a corpse which impressed him with the vanity of all life; finally he met a

mendicant monk, a homeless ascetic who had forsaken home and friends. This monk declared that he sought deliverance for himself and the salvation of all creatures. Gautama at once declared that this last life of renunciation was the life for him. Whereupon he forsakes wife and child and friends and flees to a distant part of the country. He endures many hardships, inflicts upon himself many forms of self-denial, endures temptation in various forms, meditates long, and finally the light of true knowledge breaks upon his mind. Henceforth he is "the Enlightened" one and the giver of light to others.[5]

383. What was this light? It is in its essentials very simply stated. It is a knowledge of the following truths: All life is misery. Of this misery there are two causes, lust or desire and ignorance. Not only is all life misery; every life as we see it is also one link in a chain of successive existences. Every man has had previous states of existence. The cause of the present pain and sorrow is the acts committed in former periods. The present life is the resultant of past lives under other conditions. Man is thus held in an iron chain of cause and effect. The Buddhist thus had a simple explanation of the unequal distribution of good and evil. The sufferings of a man now are the exact expression of the sins of previous states of existence.

How can man's state of misery be cured? As there are two causes, desire and ignorance, so there are two cures, the suppression of desire and knowl-

edge. All desire is to be extinguished, but above all the desire for continuity of existence. This desire is fatal to the hope of deliverance in the Buddhistic gospel. In his famous fire-sermon Gautama expounds this doctrine vividly: "Everything, O monks, is burning; sounds are burning; the nose is burning, odors are burning; the tongue is burning, tastes are burning; the body is burning, objects of sense are burning; the mind is burning; thoughts are burning. All are burning with the fire of passions and lusts." Then follows an exhortation to the disciple to free himself from desires and from passions.[6]

384. The other cure for the misery of existence is knowledge, but the knowledge required is the knowledge simply of the four truths of Buddhism, as follows: 1. All existence—that is, existence in any form, whether on earth or in heavenly spheres—necessarily involves pain and suffering. 2. All suffering is caused by lust or craving or desire. 3. Cessation of suffering is simultaneous with extinction of lust, craving and desire. 4. Extinction of lust, craving and desire and cessation of suffering are accomplished by perseverance in the noble eight-fold path. The eight-fold path is right belief, that is, belief in Buddha and his doctrine; right resolve, that is, abandoning one's wife and family as the best method of extinguishing desire; right speech, or the recitation of the Buddha's doctrine; right work, that is, the work of a monk; right livelihood, or living by alms; right exercise, or the suppression

of self; right mindfulness, or keeping in mind the impermanence and impurities of the body; right mental concentration, or concentration in trancelike quietude.[7]

385. Two speculative doctrines lie at the basis of Buddha's teaching. The first is the belief in metempsychosis or transmigration of souls, and the second is its twin doctrine of *Karma* as taught by the Buddha. The idea of transmigration of souls was borrowed. Its origin is not known. Gautama adapted it to his system. Indeed, in a real sense it is the core of his doctrine. A man may exist successively as reptile, bird, beast, man. He may rise to the many Buddhist heavens or fall to the many hells, spending countless ages in expiation of past deeds. These are transient forms of being, however; stations, so to speak, along the road to Nirvana. Nirvana is the extinction of desire and the end of the experiences of rebirth. It is the ultimate goal of the Buddhist struggle.

386. Does Nirvana, according to Buddhism, imply extinction of being or simply extinction of desire? To answer this question we must first consider the Buddhist theory of *Karma*. This word answers roughly to our idea of penalty or the principle of retribution. A man's present state of existence is due to his past. The man of to-day is not exactly the individual of a past generation whom he succeeds, yet he is the Karmic result of that individual's past existence. The one was like a candle which

lighted another candle and then went out. There is a line of causation and continuity but not identity of personality. The flame of desire burns, so to speak, across the dry stubble of existence, not the same in shape or magnitude, but as one continuous force. Karma is the continuity of the flame to the end and Nirvana is its final extinction.

Thus it appears that Buddhism scarcely leaves room for the entity which we call soul. The soul is conceived of materialistically. Hence, it would seem to be the logic of the doctrine of Karma that the identity of the soul perishes utterly, that Nirvana is not merely extinction of desire but of being.

Professor Rhys Davids, one of the highest authorities on Buddhism, holds that Gautama Buddha neither asserted nor denied the continued existence of the soul after Nirvana.[8] The evidence strongly confirms this view. Buddha was intensely practical in his aims. His peculiar genius and method led him to eschew speculations about the past or future. He evaded all such questions, though he accepted the doctrine of transmigration.[9] This was a mistake. The practical man overreached himself. It would have aided his teaching immensely if he had asserted something positive and definite as to the future. Agnosticism is not a good working theory of life. Later Buddhism did not hesitate to make assertions on the subject of the future. It took various forms. Buddhism scarcely exists to-day in the pure original.

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387. The ethics of Buddha were in some aspects very elevated. He proclaimed universal love. He recognized the distinction between inward and outward morality. His commands for all were: Kill not any living thing; steal not; commit not adultery; lie not; drink not strong drink. Some of the virtues he commended were: Generosity, moral conduct, patience or tolerance, fortitude, suppression of desire, transcendental wisdom, truth, resolution, good will, indifference or imperturbability, or apathy.

388. Like all great religions Buddhism has some very attractive qualities. Its victory over caste and the existing priestly religions was a mark of its power. It opened the door of such hope as it offered not merely to a few but to all. The "enlightenment" which it enjoined was open to the lowest as well as the highest. It erected no impassable religious barrier before the common man. Then, too, it announced a great truth in the assertion that man's destiny is connected intimately with moral character. Doubtless it was greatly successful in softening the manners and morals of many peoples to whom it went, and in a measure it subdued fierce tribes to a quieter and more wholesome life.

389. When we compare Buddhism with Christianity, however, its insufficiency at once appears. We may begin with the supreme need of any religion, its doctrine of God. Original Buddhism has no doctrine of God. Here also Gautama was an agnostic, and practically his system was atheistic. The belief

in God was not a working theory even in his teaching. Man could hope for no help from without. Self-reliance was the only possible road to deliverance. Redemption in the Christian sense was, of course, wholly incompatible with Buddhism. Place the doctrine of God as Father taught by Jesus over against the Buddhist negation; place the Christian idea of forgiveness and a fresh start over against the Buddhist Karma and transmigration through countless ages; consider the Christian hope of individual immortality, resurrection and fullness of life, as against the Buddhist Nirvana and extinction of being, and you have a very few of the sharp antitheses of the two faiths.

390. Buddhism is not strictly speaking a religion at all but a philosophic and moral system. A religion without some kind of a god is no religion. Strictly speaking we may also add Buddhism is scarcely a system of morality. It does emphasize man's responsibility for his own acts, yet it binds him in the iron chain of metempsychosis. It knows nothing of sin in the sense of guilt growing out of violation of divine law. Its ethical precepts are all at bottom self-regarding. Its patience is but a lofty stoicism; its love is prompted by the motive to extinguish desire in self. Love is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Professor Rhys Davids finds in it an altruism like that of the man who desires only to survive in the good he has done and the future benefits his influence may impart to others.

Thus the Buddhist by attaining Nirvana reduces the sum total of misery in the world and so far brings relief to struggling humanity and thus realizes for himself the aspiration of George Eliot's well-known lines:

"O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end in self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues . . .
This is life to come."

391. Professor Marcus Dods, who cites the above lines from George Eliot, expresses the opinion that Professor Rhys Davids' theory is due more to his own elevated moral sentiment than to Buddhist principles.[10] Be this as it may, it is certain that Buddhist altruism is primarily engrossed in ridding one's self of desire. It is a scheme for "the perfecting of one's self by accumulating merit with the ultimate view of annihilating all consciousness of self—a system which teaches the greatest respect for the life of others, with the ultimate view of extinguishing one's own." "The self to be got rid of in Buddhism is

not the selfishness condemned by Christianity but rather the self of individuality—the self of individual life and personal identity."[11] The sole aim of the Buddhist is suicide; his one problem is how to end his own existence. The Buddhist heaven, annihilation, is one form in which men in Christian lands hold the doctrine of hell. This is an index to the essential difference between the two beliefs. Pessimism, despair, disintegration and death are the sole issue of the Buddhist struggle for character. Hope, joy, fullness of life, likeness to God, these inspire the Christian struggle.

392. Buddhism is, indeed, a dark background against which the glories of Christianity shine with splendour. Christianity contains everything good in Buddhism, and far more. The moral ideals and standards which men employ in estimating the worth of Buddhism are borrowed from Christianity. Christ alone has made these measures of value current in the world. It is not strange that we find some broken fragments of the ideal and perfect religion in other forms of belief. Christianity, the religion of the divine initiative and divine revelation, and especially of the divine redemption from sin, with its complete equipment for all man's spiritual wants, is immeasurably in advance of the remarkable teachings of the gentle and winning Gautama. Hard and trying must be the conditions of life in a country where a gospel of despair finds so many adherents. One longs, as one reads the tragic story of the Indian

quest for spiritual peace and rest to carry to those lands of eastern Asia where Buddhism has sway, the evangel of Christian hope and power, the message of him who said, "He that hateth his life in this world" not "shall find Nirvana," but "shall keep it unto life eternal," and who also said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

CHAPTER XXV.

CHRISTIANITY THE TOTAL ANSWER TO MAN'S RELIGIOUS NEED.

393. Those who care most for the religious welfare of mankind must rejoice that in recent years, especially since the publication of Mr. Kidd's *Social Evolution,* writers of all schools are disposed to concede religion its place in human progress. Man is inherently and essentially religious in the sense that some kind of worship is practically universal. This is no longer denied. As a consequence the young science of Comparative Religion has acquired a fresh hold upon the interest of thoughtful men. But this renewed activity in comparative religion has exhibited one singular and suggestive phase or tendency which, for the most part, has passed unnoticed. The tendency is that which applies a double method of valuation in estimating the various religions. It is quite common for men of a certain bias against Christianity to reduce its contents to the lowest possible minimum, and to compare this minimum with the highest possible maximum of moral and spiritual content in Buddhism or other ethnic religions.

394. This passion for reducing the Christian religion to a minimum, or for finding its "essence" in

its lowest possible terms, is the result in part of the supposed apologetic necessities of the hour. We must believe as little as possible of the Christian system in order to defend it against current science. This science, in some of its votaries, is impatient of all truth save that to be derived from the phenomena of the physical universe. But it should be noted that to accommodate Christianity to the demands of a fragmentary science is fatal to Christianity. Such a proceeding is, to borrow an expressive phrase, "to empty out the baby with the water of the bath." If Christianity be indefensible, then let us face the fact; but let us not violate the principles of true science by blinding ourselves to a part, and that the most essential part, of the facts of the greatest moral and spirtual phenomenon of history. By all means strip away excrescenses, reduce Christianity to its original and essential elements, but leave it as thus purified in its integrity.

395. The final and practical test of any religion is this: Does it provide for all man's religious needs? No religion which claims to be final and absolute can hold its position if it fails to make good this claim. As an answer to man's total moral and religious need no other faith can for a moment compare with the Christian. We must come back to this method of appraising the spiritual value of all religions. We must look at them as wholes over against the total requirement in the life of man for which they claim to make adequate provision. It is pro-

posed in this closing chapter to consider this question in regard to Christianity.

396. Before taking up the main point, however, there is one matter which should be noticed briefly. Are we warranted in making a distinction between the absolutely and the relatively best in comparing religions? Is Christianity, while ideally and theoretically the highest, also practically best for all peoples at all stages of development? Is not Mohammedanism, for example, better for the tribes of Arabia and other oriental peoples than Christianity? This claim is sometimes made on the assumption that a process of development is necessary leading up to Christianity, corresponding to that in Judaism. A part of this assumption is a doctrine of "the fullness of times," which forbids the supposition that the religion of Chrst is adapted to all men equally at all stages of moral and spiritual development. National and tribal groups of men must ripen, so to speak, as the Jews did, by long periods of struggle in order to become susceptible to the influence of the Gospel of Christ.

397. In view of this position several things may be said. The first is that it is based upon a false conception of Christianity as to its method of propagation. The Christian religion goes primarily to individuals, not to nations, and it advances not by the sword but by persuasion. The real question, then, would not be whether this or that race or tribe as such is ready for Christianity, but whether in them

are to be found individuals through whom the leaven of the Gospel may be introduced. It is thus that the Christian faith is universally adapted to men. It contemplates reaching the many through the selected few. There is no record of its complete failure in the pursuit of this, its proper method. Christianity is not an opportunist religion as are Mohammedanism and Buddhism. It does not derive its chief strength from some local or temporary situation on which it builds, or from some current abuse against which it is a reaction and protest. It fits into all conditions, but acts through universal laws.

It may be said further that the principle of the "fullness of times," in the New Testament teaching, seems to have had a far wider application than to the development of Israel. The fullness of times meant the political solidarity of the race. The world, in other words, was a unit, the parts interrelated and dependent upon each other. Thus it was possible for Christ to take hold of the world as a whole by grasping it at a single point.

The claim that Christianity is not equally adapted to all men at all times is to be met in another way. Its most pronounced successes have been among the lowest and the highest races of mankind. The missionary stories of Madagascar and some interior tribes of Africa, of the Hawaiian and the South Sea Islands, and of some other parts of the world, show its fitness as a Gospel for the lowest peoples. Its general prevalence in all the western world is the ever present

proof of its influence among the most advanced races. In the light of these facts there is scarcely any ground for the assertion that it lacks adaptation to the intermediate races. The real explanation here is that pride of race and faith renders these peoples at the outset less hospitable to new truth. A little time for missionaries to master the problem of the wise method of setting forth the saving truths most effectively will silence the objection. Indeed, it is not too much to assert, as it has been asserted by others, that within the past hundred years Christianity has shown itself to be a universal religion.[1]

398. But the sufficient and conclusive proof that Christianity is best for all men is to show that it is a religion for man as man. Its principles are as universal as the race. They omit nothing essential to man's spirtual welfare; they reach to the lowest of mankind and raise men to the highest possible moral and spirtual elevation. To make good these statements we must now attempt a brief general survey of its principles.

399. First and foremost in importance is its doctrine of God. Men will have an object of worship. Comte proposed the worship of humanity; Strauss suggested the universe as the proper object of our reverence. But these proposals did not and do not appeal to men's minds or hearts. The Christian God is the most suitable object of universal worship.

This is true in part because the God of Christianity is *personal*. The universal tendency of worship-

pers is to personalize the object of faith. Polytheism shows this clearly. Brahmanism and modern pantheism suppose an abstract impersonal principle into which the soul will in due time be reabsorbed. But higher speculative minds alone can rest content in this view. The masses lapse promptly into polytheism. Moreover, pantheism leaves men passive. The need is for a personal supreme will if men are to be made moral. The Buddhist denial of God also ends in polytheism. The history of religions is conclusive on this point: an impersonal object of worship does not command the reverence of the masses of men.

Deism teaches that God is a person, but exalts him above the world and man. This impassable gulf between God and man is intolerable to a living faith. Hence, deistic religons do not flourish and spread. Judaism did not. Modern Unitarianism has not yet proved its capacity as a missionary religion. All its history is against it on this point. Mohammedanism is deistic, but has never been widely propagated by spiritual means.

Christianity, on the other hand, teaches a personal God, who became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Incarnation is the characteristic Christian idea, not, indeed, as an idea merely, but also as a historic fact. This fact marks the Christian as a revealed religion, because the idea of incarnation was not only foreign to but entirely unbearable to the Jews among whom it arose. Comparative religion shows that this was true of the other Semitic peoples also.

400. Now this incarnation of God in Christ shows that God is one, that there is something human in God and that there is something divine in man. In Christ, moreover, it appears that God is personal and that he is moral. The two qualities which coexist in him in infinite perfection are love and righteousness. Nature nowhere reveals *character* in God in any adequate degree. For the first time men discovered in Christ that God is love and that holiness is of his very essence. They discovered, moreover, that he is no passive spectator of the universe but profoundly concerned in the welfare of man. He appears now as a seeking God. The lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost son in the parables, clearly show that God feels impoverished when men are lost, that he will endure sacrifice at infinite cost in order to recover them, and that he awaits the return of the prodigal with a Father's welcome. Moreover, this gracious and radiant picture of God became forever fixed in human form. We beheld the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Thus in Jesus Christ all man's problems about God find solution. The cold and abstract principle of pantheism warms into a Being with a heart of infinite tenderness; the empty eye socket of the atheistic negation is filled with the glances of the Father's eye; the far-away Being of deism draws near and we hear him speak; the many gods of the polytheist are merged into one and this one is seen to possess all power and all holiness and all other attributes of perfection.

For the first time in the religous history of man the conception of God becomes definite, vivid, winning and workable.

401. Is it possible to improve upon the conception of God as revealed in Christ? Certainly at present no one can suggest any defect or lack therein. A man disposed to cavil might deny the finality of man's present moral and spiritual ideal and assert that it may be possible for the race to outgrow it. But the assertion carries little force. There are, indeed, numerous variations from the Christian conception of God in current thought. Some of these fall below and some attempt to rise above the God of Christ. But these fail to appeal to the generality of serious-minded men. The infra-personal and infra-moral God becomes a merely physical force without power over the higher nature of man. The super-personal and super-moral God is vague and abstract and so emptied of definiteness of content as to avail nothing for practical purposes. Hence, we conclude that whether men admit the force of the evidence for Christ and God or not there is little likelihood that they will ever be able to point out any serious defect in the revelation of God which Christ has left us.

402. It is to be noted next that the Christian view of man is as high as it is possible to conceive. We need not dwell upon this. The point has already been elaborated in the twenty-second chapter. Man is made in God's image. He is of infinite worth to

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God by virtue simply of his humanity. His destiny is to an immortality of conscious existence. His chief end is self-realization through conformity to the will of God as exhibited in and taught by Jesus Christ. Thus shall he best glorify God and enjoy him forever. "Whom he foreknew them he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his son." Sin is not merely an infirmity, or a mistake, or a "fall upward;" it is rebellion against the personal God, the introduction of anarchy into the moral realm and fraught with possibilities of eternal loss to man.

403. Now man's religious needs grow out of his essential nature as a free spiritual personality, made in the image of God, and brought under the dominion of sin. For one thing he needs a revelation which is clear and explicit, as to who and what God is. This, as we have already seen, Christ has abundantly supplied. Next he needs reconciliation and redemption. There must come into his life a power from without if he is ever to rise above himself. This power may come gradually and unfold itself from within man's consciousness, but it must nevertheless come as from the outside, must be an addition to the sum total of man's spiritual resources in his natural state. This is redemption. Pardon and reconciliation with God enter into this redemption as an integral part. The sense of guilt must be removed, the bondage of sin must be broken. Along with these is bound up a life of fellowship with God.

This is the chief end of religion, to unite man with God. Some think the etymology of the word implies this "binding to God." Whatever is true of the word the fact cannot be gainsaid.

404. But man's religious need is greater than we have yet indicated. He must somehow be enabled to pass out of himself. He is a social being. His own highest possibilties are to be realized only through sacrifice. Hence he needs some moral and spiritual motive power which shall be able to hold him to the pursuit of a divine ideal. Thus he must become the servant of his fellows, even to the laying down of his life for them if need requires. Under the law of service a new and spiritual kingdom arises out of which must be progressively cast everything that is unclean, unjust, unlovely, and everything which loveth and maketh a lie. At length, in a social heaven redeemed spirits transfigured into the image of God are to dwell in this presence forevermore.

Now to meet these spiritual needs of man, Christianity with its doctrine and fact of incarnation exhibits God as himself missionary and historic. Moving on the plane of man's being audibly, visibly, stoopingly, yet omnipotently he comes to redeem. The practical bearings of the doctrine of the Trinity are seen here. It exhibits a God capable of self-sacrifice and equal to the task of redemption. Incarnation so far from appearing as a mark of limitation and imperfection is thus seen to be rather

an evidence of enlarged activity and of perfection in God. If love demanded redemption and redemption required incarnation it were a token of impotence in God if incarnation were beyond his reach.

405. Priesthood, sacrifice and mediation are inwrought as idea and institution in practically all religions. Judaism provided for this fundamental religious need in its Levitical system. The epistle to the Hebrews interprets them all in terms of Christ. He is the ideal Priest, Sacrifice and Mediator. "Once for all' by the offering of himself he put an end to the necessity for the outward ritual. Henceforth all men may become priests unto God through his perfect sacrifice. Thus man's sense of sin and guilt are wiped out of his consciousness and as son and heir he "comes boldly to a throne of grace to obtain mercy and find help in time of need." Thus comes restored fellowship and union between God and man.

406. But observe how this union is brought to pass. It is not by the quenching of individuality as in the pantheistic reabsorption. It is not by extinction of being as in the Buddhist Nirvana. It is rather by a moral union, a coinciding of holy wills, in which the personal God and the personal man remain forever distinct, each capable of enjoying the other—man the object of the eternal self-communication of God and God the object of the eternal service and praise of man.

407. The Christian moral ideal is the highest

ever conceived. Men have repeatedly declared that the Sermon on the Mount is impracticable. The explanation is to be found in the assumption underlying the Sermon on the Mount. That assumption is Regeneration. God does not command men to make bricks without straw. Augustine's beautiful prayer is the key to the difficulty. "Give what thou commandest and command what thou wilt." God lifts men to the plane of the Sermon on the Mount by the impartation of a spiritual nature. When this is done a new and holy character has begun; indeed, new systems and civilizations arise out of this vital germ. The indwelling Spirit abiding to the end in the Christian's heart ministers of the things of Christ, carries on the work of sanctification by a process of spiritual evolution, utilizing every element of the earthly environment as a means of growth, and at length by the resurrection of the body completes the work.

"But," it may be asked, "is this lofty religion one which can be appropriated by men universally?" Does it appeal, as we have declared, to man as man regardless of race, climate or condition? Does it reach the ignorant and learned? May its principles be grasped by all men everywhere? The answer is an emphatic affirmative, which we now propose to show.

408. Two or three general statements may be made. For one thing Christianity has universalized worship. Times and places are no longer required.

Anywhere and everywhere men may call upon God, who is a spirit, and look for answer to their call. Moreover, the principles of Christianity are identified with no particular form of civilization. They work as leaven in any social order, and slowly transform it into higher forms. But the universalism of Christianity is seen especially in the nature of the conditions laid down for its acceptance.

409. These conditions are two, repentance and faith. These two in turn are parts of one radical change in the soul's attitude. Look now at the simplicity of these terms. They are elementary to the last degree. They are common to the experience of the earliest childhood, and, after their kind, they are common to all races and peoples. They are as ultimate and essentially human as anything which can be named. The child learns faith in trusting the mother in earliest years, and whatever the moral standard of delinquency, repentance in some form is common to all mankind. Brahmanism is passive and properly understood means submission; Buddhism essentially means submission; Islam literally means submission. Now submission becomes repentance and faith the moment the object of devotion ceases to be an abstract principle, or law, or a mere almighty power, and becomes a moral person.

These moral terms of admission to the kingdom of Christ are thus seen to be ultimate moral principles in their simplicity. Just as every form of deductive reasoning is identical in principle with

every other, and just as the lowest types of men, and in the opinion of some, even animals, reason in some rudimentary way on these same elementary principles, so we have in faith and repentance the lowest moral universals. Hence, Christianity appeals to man as man. All distinctions are necessarily wiped out, and a common need growing out of sin reduces all to a common level and places the conditions within reach of all.

410. It should be noted also that repentance and faith, while they are at the last degree of simplicity in the moral scale, and thus within the reach of the lowest intelligence, contain the promise of the highest results in the end. This is because they relate man to God dynamically. They do not impose moral burdens merely. They open his nature to the inflow of the divine life and energy. They remove obstructions and permit Christ to become for man "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." A new sense of power at once arises within and all moral attainment seems suddenly to become possible. In these conditions are the prophecy of all wisdom and knowledge, all beauty of holiness, all loveliness and winsomeness of individuality, all heights of moral attainment in every form and variety.

411. The religion of Jesus appeals to the highest and noblest instincts in man. The love of being, of attainment and victory are idealized in it as nowhere else. As long as men seek the goals of endeavor which awaken these impulses they will be

found to possess affinity for Christ. As a recent writer has said: "The supremacy of Jesus among the religious teachers of mankind rests upon the verdict of life. One can predict the universal and final rejection of Christianity only as one shall forecast the universal and final denial of the will to live. Universal and permanent pessimism alone can succeed in relegating the Gospel of Christ to an inferior position. Because the desire for life is deep and ineradicable, because it prevails more and more wherever existence is normal, Christianity is bound to become the religion of the world. Victorious and passionately aspiring life can never rest long under the shadow of a pessimistic Gospel. The leader for an achieving humanity is he who came to give the more abundant life."[3]

412. It is not for Christians to express contempt or to rail at other religions. The contemplation of these is an occasion for the awakening in us of deep compassion and pity. They are human attempts, earnest and lofty some of them, to find God. They all alike exhibit the weakness and inadequacy of man's natural powers as blinded by sin. In Christianity God comes seeking man, and we who have known the love and light and power of Christ will be guilty beyond the power of language to express if we fail to exert ourselves to make known Christ's Gospel to the ends of the earth. Christ stands at the end of every winding path of human speculation in the search for God. His is the answer to

all the questionings of the heart of man about eternal things. As Dr. Fairbairn says: "Christ is more a response to a nature dissatisfied with its own discoveries and knowledge than an absolute miracle which violates all that nature's laws."[4]

The religion of the Buddha is the saddest wail that ever issued from the human heart under the burdens and sorrows of existence. That wail should be to us as a call to active missionary endeavor. The guarantee that men will hear us and not Buddha is found in the constitution of the human spirit. The following words of Dr. George A. Gordon are none too strong: "We hear Buddha say that existence is desire, that desire is egoism, that egoism is misery, and that the highest hope of man is the hope of extinction. The noble ethical discipline that becomes the only path to the peace of nothingness must be estimated in the presence of the goal to which it is adjusted, in the presence also of the universe which makes this goal the highest human beatitude. We hear Buddha speak and the whole of our world is against him. He is exalted, he is gracious, he is full of indescribable pity, he is benign; but he is from our point of view the victim of an immeasurable and a hideous mistake. We hear Jesus say that existence is desire, that desire is ordained of God to become love, that love is pure and glorious joy, and that his mission is to fill humanity with love that it may be filled with worth and joy. Here our world is with Jesus. All believers in life, all reformers of life, all

idealists for life, and the whole soul of our civilization side with Jesus. And once more it must be said that for the world that wants to live, to live worthily, royally and endlessly there is no rival leadership to Jesus Christ."[5]

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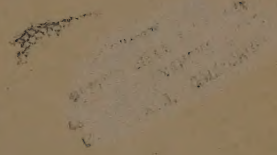
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